SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1223 00084 3285

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1223 00084 3285
584956
B M468a r 1923

LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

A portrait bust in terra-cotta, believed to be taken from the mask on the dead head by Antonio Pollaiuolo. In the Fortnum Collection presented to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

(*From a photograph, taken by Hills and Saunders, for this book.*)

Frontispicce.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI

AND FLORENCE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

BY

E. ARMSTRONG, M.A.

FELLOW OF QUEENS COLLEGE
OXFORD

Bisogna concludere che sotto lui la città non fussi in libertà, nondimeno che sarebbe impossibile avesse avuto un tiranno migliore e più piacevole.

GUICCIARDINI.

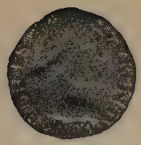
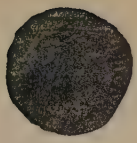
LONDON & NEW YORK
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

First Published - 1901
New Edition - 1923

B
M468ar
584956 1923

Made in Great Britain by
THE BOTOLPH PRINTING WORKS
GATE STREET, KINGSWAY, W.C.2

000843285

Lorenzo de' Medici, and reverse.

PREFACE.

IT might be urged with much apparent reason that Florence is no nation, and Lorenzo de' Medici no hero. He was no slayer of men in a national cause; only once did he draw his sword and then he failed to strike. No people owed to him its freedom, for he completed the subjugation of the Florentine republic. He added but slightly to the state's territories, he bequeathed to it no one important building. Nevertheless in the most interesting century of Italian history Florence was the most typical state, and Lorenzo the most typical citizen. Had Henry VII. of England or Louis XI. of France been asked who was the most remarkable man in Italy, they would have named Lorenzo, and this must be the justification for his inclusion in this series.

No biography of Lorenzo will ever be definitive, for the questions in dispute are rather of feeling than of fact. It is not certain that documents, as yet unpublished, will contribute much to solve these questions, although, while the history of his diplomatic

activity is, perhaps, needlessly detailed, our knowledge of his home policy is still deficient. The present work can lay little claim to original research. Its object is to present within a moderate compass materials which previous biographers and historians have already used. To such authors I must once for all acknowledge my obligations, to Fabroni and Roscoe, to Capponi, Buser, and Perrens, and more particularly to the exhaustive biography of Lorenzo by Von Reumont. Much aid has been derived from the numerous modern Italian writers who have treated various sides of the subject, from Canestrini's *Scienza di Stato*, from the authors of articles in the *Archivio Storico Italiano*, the *Nuova Antologia*, and other periodicals, and from the lectures delivered in Florence in 1892, which have been published under the title *La Vita Italiana del Rinascimento*. To Professor Villari my especial gratitude is due, not only for the stimulus supplied by his monumental works on Florentine history, but for his generous personal assistance in difficulties upon which I consulted him.

In the chapter on Literature I have often very closely followed the invaluable text-book of the late Professor Gaspary, but my obligation is none the less to the talented band of Italian writers who acknowledge Carducci and del Lungo as their leaders, and to J. A. Symonds, whose loss all lovers of Italian art and literature still deplore. In the history and criticism of Renaissance art the conflict of opinion is so perplexing that the veriest amateur is forced in the last resort to rely upon his own observation

and his private judgment. Yet to the formation of such judgment the works of writers who differ so widely as Morelli, Frizzoni, Müntz, Meyer, Bode, and Ulmann must necessarily contribute, apart from the older publications of Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Perkins and Milanesi. I, as many others, drew my first literary knowledge of the greatest painter of the Laurentian age from the essay of Walter Pater. Had he but lived, his promised aid would have served to veil the inexperience of a novice in the history of art and letters.

I must express my gratitude to Lord Windsor, to Dr. Fortnum, and the Curators and Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, to Dr. G. Frizzoni, and to Mr. G. Donaldson for the generous permission to illustrate my book from works of art in their possession or custody. The illustrations are in most cases derived from photographs, which I have been enabled to utilise by the kindness of Messrs. Alinari of Florence, A. Brogi of Florence, Dixon of London, Hills & Saunders of Oxford, Kühl & Co. of Frankfort, and C. Marcozzi, of Milan.

E. ARMSTRONG.

OXFORD, 1895.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

1434–1464.

PAGE

The causes of the supremacy of the Medici—The power of Cosimo 1–42

CHAPTER II.

1464–1469.

Accession of Piero de' Medici to power—Introduction of Lorenzo to public life—Opposition to the Medici—The Neroni conspiracy—The Colleonic war—Lorenzo's tournament—His marriage—His visit to Milan 43–83

CHAPTER III.

1469–1472.

Lorenzo and Giuliano at the head of the State—Constitutional and financial experiments — Social pre-eminence of the Medici — Lorenzo's Italian contemporaries — Rebellion of Volterra 84–113

CHAPTER IV.

1472–1478.

Lorenzo's disputes with the Pope—Rivalry between Medici and Pazzi—Plot of the Pazzi and Girolamo Riario—Assassination of Giuliano de' Medici—Punishment of the conspirators, 114–143

CHAPTER V.

1478–1480.

PAGE

War with the Papacy and Naples—Character of Italian soldiery —Lorenzo's visit to Naples—The Turks take Otranto . 144–181

CHAPTER VI.

1480–1492.

War of Ferrara—Election of Innocent VIII.—The Neapolitan barons' war—Affair of Osimo—Assassinations in Romagna —Lorenzo's diplomacy 182–234

CHAPTER VII.

1480–1492.

Changes in the constitution—Financial measures of the Medici —Party government at Florence—Civil and criminal justice —Despotic authority of Lorenzo, and its popularity . 235–288

CHAPTER VIII.

1469–1492.

Lorenzo's character and home life—The cardinalate of Giovanni —Lorenzo's relation to Savonarola—Opinions of Machiavelli and Guicciardini on his rule—Lorenzo's death—Its effects upon Italy and Florence 289–322

CHAPTER IX.

1466–1492.

Literature of the Medicean period—The writers of Lorenzo's age—His own works—University of Pisa—Introduction of printing 323–389

CHAPTER X.

Art of the Medicean period—Influence of Lorenzo—Sculpture, painting, and architecture—Music at Florence . . 390–442

INDEX 443–449

ILLUSTRATIONS.

RENZO DE' MEDICI [1] . . . . . *Frontispiece*

A portrait bust in terra-cotta, believed to be taken from the mask on the dead head by Antonio Pollaiuolo. In the Fortnum Collection presented to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

IE ADORATION OF THE MAGI [6] 16

With portraits of the Medici family, Politian, Botticelli, and numerous Florentine citizens. An altarpiece by Sandro Botticelli in the Uffizi Gallery.

ERO DE' MEDICI THE ELDER [3] 32

Portrait bust by Mino da Fiesole in the Bargello at Florence.

CREZIA (TORNABUONI) DE' MEDICI 44

Portrait in the Berlin Museum by Sandro Botticelli.

RENZO DE' MEDICI [3] 54

As a youth riding under a bay tree. From a fresco of the *Procession of the Magi*, by Benozzo Gozzoli in the chapel of the Riccardi, or Medici, Palace.

LORENTINE WEDDING [2] 74

Scene in the story of Nastagio degli Onesti painted by Sandro Botticelli for the wedding of Giovanni Bini and Lucrezia Pucci in 1487. Their scutcheons and that of the Medici are represented. In the collection of G. Donaldson, Esq^re.

THE TOMB OF PIERO AND GIOVANNI DE' MEDICI [3] . . . 8
In the old sacristy of San Lorenzo. Designed by Andrea Verrocchio for Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici.

SIXTUS IV [3] 10
Pietro and Girolamo Riario, Giuliano and Giovanni della Rovere, and Platina the librarian. Picture by Melozzo da Forlì in the Vatican.

THE CASTLE OF VOLTERRA 11
Built by Lorenzo de' Medici after the sack of 1472.

A LADY, PROBABLY OF THE MEDICI FAMILY [5] 12
She wears the Medici gem of Marsyas. Portrait by Sandro Botticelli in the Museum at Frankfort.

PALAZZO PUBBLICO 13
With the Pazzi conspirators hanging from the windows. From a woodcut in Politian's *Conjurationis Pactianæ Commentarium*, edited by J. Adimari, 1769.

GIULIANO DE' MEDICI [4] 14
Portrait by Sandro Botticelli in the gallery at Bergamo.

A PLAN TO ILLUSTRATE THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1478–9 . . 15

PALLAS, BY SANDRO BOTTICELLI [3] 17
In the private apartments of the Pitti Palace. This picture, recently discovered, is believed to commemorate the return of Lorenzo from Naples in 1480. It represents the triumph of Medicean civilisation and peace, over anarchy and war. Pallas is wreathed with olive branches and her dress is adorned with Lorenzo's emblems, the triple ring and diamond. The ship may betoken that in which Lorenzo brought the tidings of peace.

FEDERIGO OF MONTEFELTRO, DUKE OF URBINO [3] . . . 18
Portrait by Piero della Francesca in the Uffizi Gallery.

THE OLD WALLS OF SARZANA 2
Fortified by Lorenzo de' Medici after the recapture in 1487.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI [3] 2
A later composition from contemporary materials by Giorgio Vasari. In the Uffizi Gallery.

EDICI PALACE 248
Built for Cosimo by Michelozzo. From a woodcut in Politian's *Conjurationis Pactianæ Commentarium*, edited by J. Adimari, 1769.

AY-DAY BEFORE THE MEDICI PALACE 284
A choir of girls offers a wreath to Lorenzo. From the frontispiece to "Canzone a ballo composte dal magnifico Lorenzo de' Medici e da M. Agnolo Politiano." Florence, 1568.

ILLA AT POGGIO A CAIANO [3] 294
Built for Lorenzo by Giuliano da San Gallo.

ILLA MEDICI AT CAREGGI [3] 308
Where Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo died.

ERO DE' MEDICI THE YOUNGER [2] 318
He holds a medal of his great grandfather Cosimo. Portrait by Sandro Botticelli in the Uffizi Gallery.

RISTOFORO LANDINO AND HIS CLASS 324
From the frontispiece to "Formulario di lettere e di orationi volgari composte per Cristofero Landini." Printed by Miscomini in 1492.

ARSILIO FICINO [6] 338
Portrait bust by Antonio Ferrucci in the Cathedral at Florence.

NGELO POLIZIANO [2] 356
Portrait by Lorenzo di Credi in the collection of Lord Windsor.

RD'S-EYE VIEW OF FLORENCE 388
Greatly reduced from a large engraving in the Berlin Museum. This is probably the first plan of its kind in existence, its date not being later than 1490.

NDREA VERROCCHIO [3] 402
Portrait (questioned by some authorities) by Lorenzo di Credi in the Uffizi Gallery.

NDRO BOTTICELLI [3] 412
Detail from the *Adoration of the Magi*, by himself in the Uffizi Gallery.

FILIPPINO LIPPI [3] 42
Portrait by himself in the Uffizi Gallery.

DOMENICO GHIRLANDAIO [3] 43
Detail from the *Adoration of the Magi*, by himself in the Chapel of the Innocenti at Florence.

ANTONIO SQUARCIALUPI, THE ORGANIST [3] 44
Portrait bust by Benedetto da Maiano in the Cathedral at Florence.

[1] Reproduced from a photograph taken by Hills & Saunders for this book.
[2] Reproduced, by permission, from a photograph by Dixon.
[3] Reproduced, by permission, from a photograph by Alinari.
[4] Reproduced from a photograph by Marcozzi and communicated by Dr Frizzoni.
[5] Reproduced, by permission, from a photograph by Kühl & Co.
[6] Reproduced, by permission, from a photograph by Brogi.

MEDALS AND COATS-OF-ARMS.

	PAGE.
ORENZO DE' MEDICI, AND REVERSE	V
OSIMO DE' MEDICI, AND REVERSE	I
RMS OF THE CITY OF FLORENCE, AND OF THE MEDICI FAMILY	42
LFONSO OF NAPLES—FERRANTE OF NAPLES	43
RMS OF THE PITTI AND ALBIZZI	83
ALEAZZO MARIA SFORZA, AND REVERSE	84
RMS OF PISA AND VOLTERRA	113
BERTO SAN SEVERINO—COSTANZO SFORZA	114
RMS OF THE SALVIATI AND PAZZI	143
CCOLÒ ORSINI, AND REVERSE	144
RMS OF THE STROZZI AND RUCELLAI	181
OVANNA ALBIZZI, AND REVERSE	182
RMS OF THE PUCCI AND GIANFIGLIAZZI	234
DOVICO SFORZA, AND REVERSE	235
EDAL WITH PORTRAITS OF LORENZO AND GIULIANO DE' MEDICI, STRUCK BY ANTONIO POLLAIUOLO TO COMMEMORATE THE PAZZI CONSPIRACY	266
EDAL WITH PORTRAIT OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI; ON THE REVERSE THE SEATED FIGURE OF FLORENCE	266
RMS OF THE SODERINI AND TORNABUONI	288
ROLAMO SAVONAROLA, AND REVERSE	289
RMS OF THE GUICCIARDINI AND RINUCCINI	322
O DELLA MIRANDOLA—POLITIAN	323
RMS OF PISTOIA AND CORTONA	389
AQUE OF LEO BATTISTA ALBERTI, ATTRIBUTED TO HIMSELF	390
VICE OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI	442

Cosimo de' Medici, and reverse.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

CHAPTER I.

The causes of the supremacy of the Medici—The power of Cosimo.

1434–1464.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI began his forty-three years of life on January 1, 1449. He was not born in the purple, and yet the Florentine citizen's red gown, which his grandfather and father wore, was already but a thin disguise for a race of rulers. o house in mediæval or modern Europe can boast strange a career as that of the Medici. Mere nkers by profession, possessing no military re-urces, gifted with no experience of war, aided by general convulsion, they established a despotism nich, with two inconsiderable intervals, lasted for

a round three centuries. It may be urged that Florence was but a petty city-state, embracing a territory whose extreme measurements would fall within some sixty miles of length and ninety miles of breadth. The greatness of a state, however, cannot be measured by breadth of acres, nor that of a people reckoned by the number of noses. The influence of Florence has left its traces not only upon art and literature, but upon commerce and public charity, diplomacy, and taxation. If there were in the city at this period no great soldiers and no great judges, there were at least more trained statesmen and skilled financiers, more artists and men of letters than in contemporary France or England, or perhaps in both combined. Florence has some claim to be considered the intellectual capital of the fifteenth century. That a private family should establish a political despotism in such a state, among intellects so restless and so keen, was a proof of abnormal ability, or the result of extraordinary antecedents. Nor was the influence of the Medici confined to Florence. Their fourth generation gave to St. Peter's chair two of its most celebrated occupants, while Medicean blood has found its way into every great dynasty in Europe.

The career of Lorenzo is, for the above reason, not only the biography of a gifted individual, an interesting personality; it is also a problem in political history insoluble to those who are not well acquainted with the character of the city-states of ancient Greece and Rome, and of mediæval Italy, and difficult even to an expert. In Germany also the

ere great free cities and wealthy bankers who domi-
ated the European markets. Why did not, for
xample, the house of Fugger produce a Cosimo or
Lorenzo to convert its native city-state of Augs-
urg into a civic monarchy? Even in Italy there is
o exact parallel to the fortunes of the Medici. No
amily appropriated the authority of the State at
enice. The republics of Lombardy were already
etty despotisms when the sword of the Visconti
ewed them into a state. Closely akin indeed to
ne power of the Medici was that of the house of
entivoglio in the neighbouring state of Bologna.
ut this territory was infinitely smaller and less im-
ortant than was Florence. It was, moreover, a
cognised portion of the Papal States; the Benti-
oglio family owed such independent sway as it
ossessed to the absence, the weakness, or the con-
enience of the Papacy.

The success of the Medici was in fact due to a
ombination of character and circumstance. To a
ader versed in English or French history, the story
Venice or Florence seems strange and unfamiliar.
e has traced indeed the relations of the so-called
udal monarchies, which are in their origin rural in
naracter, to the urban communities within their
ontiers; he has seen them willingly or unwillingly
dmitting the municipalities to some share in the
ntral government through the growth of repre-
ntation. Yet however closely the representatives
ay be connected with the governing body of their
wn, when they meet in the council of the nation
ey are totally distinct from a municipal council;

they are not the development of the government of a local corporation, but the modification of the national central power. In Florence and Venice all is different. Here a purely urban community gradually acquires an extensive territory embracing rural districts and once rival municipalities. There is little idea of representation within the walls of the ruling town, and none without them. It is an attempt to govern an extensive territory heterogeneous in character, and divided by local traditions and separatist antipathies, which persist to the present day, by a constitution which arose from the political and commercial necessities of a single urban community. Why the aristocracy of Venice succeeded in this task, and the more or less popular government of Florence was forced in the attempt to convert itself into a monarchy, is the most interesting problem of Italian history. Here, however, it can only be solved in part.

The early history of Florence is the tale of a conflict between the landed and the trading interests. The pushing community in the valley of the Arno found its expansion blocked by the castles of rural nobles who levied tolls on their merchandise or plundered the tempting trains of mules. Ethnical distinctions served perhaps to embitter the combatants. The rural nobles represented, by origin or association, the incrustation of the several volcanic streams of Teutonic conquest which had at different epochs overwhelmed the Italian population of the lower lands. The traders of the town were of Etruscan or Romanic stock which still contrived, as the dwellers

n the slopes of Etna or Vesuvius, to ply its indus-
y between and even upon the once fiery streams
hich had lost their destructive power. The traders
eat the soldiers in detail. The castles were dis-
antled, the avenues of trade were freed, and the
ıral nobles forced to become an urban gentry. In
ermany during a somewhat similar struggle, it was
ual to drive the defeated families into the country;
Italy these were haled within the towns. This
as by no means an unmixed advantage. The com-
unity gained vigorous leaders against a foreign
nemy, and pioneers in the field of architecture
hich Florence was to make peculiarly her own. Yet
e faction fights, hitherto decided outside the walls,
w raged within the town; the noble families, torn
m their hill-top castles, clustered round the huge
wers which dominated every city quarter; their
mily groups were for a time more than a match for
e nascent commercial associations, the trading
ilds. The conflict was merged in the wider strug-
e between the Imperial-feudal and the Papal-
unicipal parties, which in itself largely corre-
onded to the distinction between old Teutonic
migrants and yet older Italian inhabitants. The
feat of the Hohenstaufens decided the contest
hich had long divided Florence. The bulk of her
bles were exiled, their property confiscated for the
nefit of the dominant party. The victory of trade
und its fulfilment in the ordinances of 1293, the
st important of a series of measures intended to
clude the noble families from the principal offices
state. Gentility had become a disqualification for

political life. In the future "to be made a gentleman" is the penalty inflicted by the majority on the more obnoxious members of the opposition, whatever might be their birth.

This was not all gain. Machiavelli ascribes to the humiliation of the nobles the loss of the military spirit, the growth of the mercenary system, and the consequent slavery of Italy. The grandees moreover had still much social influence, their landed wealth and connections gained them wide support; they not unfrequently pulled the wires in the electioneering contests among their conquerors. Here, as elsewhere, it would be idle to assert that a class which is disqualified from any share in popular elections has never in fact decided them. Nevertheless the greater trading guilds were dominant, pushing their commerce within Europe and without, monopolising the government of their town, and directing it solely towards their class interests. Their position was not, however, quite secure. Below the mercantile corporations were the Lesser Arts—the guilds of tradesmen, whose interests lay rather on the side of the gentry than of the merchants, who disliked the forward policy which by force opened up fresh avenues of commerce, and brought upon Florence the jealousy and cupidity of her neighbours, entailing heavy pecuniary sacrifices, enforcing sumptuary laws, and trammelling their own trades. They would welcome, rather, a life of peace and enjoyment, wherein the nobles could spend upon the town the revenues of their estates unplundered and untaxed. For them were the profits of expenditure on

alaces and furniture, on furs and trappings, on ournaments and wedding feasts. Below the Lesser rts again sulked the numerous guilds, economically ubordinate to the Greater Arts, to whose manufac-ures they ministered, and politically deprived of any epresentation in the state; below them again the ubmerged, or rather the floating, tenth of unem-loyed and half-employed, who subsisted on such weepings and pickings of work as a busy community upplies. Already could be heard beneath the round the mutterings of an explosion of labour gainst capital; already in 1347 the artisans had truck for a higher wage.

There was yet another danger, less obvious, more ubtle, but fraught with mischief. Anglo-Saxons are roud of constitutional conventions, but among states nore logical there is always peril when constitu-onal forms do not correspond to the realities of ower. Had Florence remained merely a trading ommunity, its guild system might have been suf-ciently elastic to adapt itself to expansion abroad nd limitation at home. The town, however, had ecome the centre of the political Guelfic party in entral and northern Italy. It was forced to raise rmies on emergency, to form alliances with foreign nonarchies, Italian or Ultramontane; it acquired in ne course of conflict a considerable territory. No rdinary municipal government could grapple with uch a task, much less the Florentine. Although lorence was now and hereafter virtually an oligar-ny, its constitutional forms were democratic. The redominant feature was the fear of a strong execu-

tive, the elimination or emasculation of ability by division of authority, by rapid rotation of office, by an intricate tangle of checks and councils, by the substitution of lot for selection, by the denial of military power. Thus it was that when vigour and experience, secrecy and rapidity were needed, they must be sought outside the official government. This is the secret of all Florentine history until the republic became a principality. This therefore was the meaning of that unofficial organisation, the "Parte Guelfa," which, when the conflict with the Ghibellines was closed, still continued to control the State, possessing large independent resources, and a highly organised executive, proscribing its opponents whether of the highest or the lowest classes under the mere pretence of Ghibellinism, bestowing all the power and wealth of Florence on a handful of families, the extremists of the ruling class. The institution had given the impetus which was necessary to surmount the steepness of the gradient; this was unfortunately not exhausted when the descent began.

Aristotle knew, and all Italians read Aristotle in translations, that the danger of an oligarchy is a schism, which leaves it at the mercy of monarchy or democracy. A victorious party, writes Machiavelli, never remained united except for so long as the hostile faction existed; this once destroyed, the former having no longer the restraint of fear, nor any principle of internal order, split within itself. Even so towards the close of the fourteenth century the Florentine oligarchy split from within. The

moderates resisted the extremists, the official government resented the superiority of the non-official. The proscription of men of wealth and family position produced dangerous ferment not only among their own class, but among those who ministered to their pleasures or received maintenance from their charities. All elements of discontent found expression in the revolution of 1378, termed the rising of the Ciompi. Its occasion was an attempt of a moderate, who happened to hold the chief magistracy, to check the Parte Guelfa in its career of vindictive proscription. Being the weaker, the official government appealed to the people for support. The Lesser Arts seized the opportunity to press their claims for equality of representation. Thence the revolution spread downward to the subordinated or "sweated" guilds, and thence to the rabble, while the persecuted gentry and unscrupulous members of the *bourgeois* oligarchy stimulated and utilised anarchy for their personal ends. Hitherto the faction fights of Florence had but stirred the surface of the state. Windows and doors were barricaded as Guelfs and Ghibellines, Blacks and Whites swept the street in flight or triumph; yet behind the walls the current of trade and manufacture flowed evenly forward. The fortunes of the governing party had been of insignificant interest to the ordinary citizen; his ambition, his livelihood, his amusement, his religious exercises, found their centre in his guild. The revolution of 1378 was, on the other hand, rather social and economic than political. If the labouring classes clamoured for political privilege, it was

merely as the means of compassing their economic emancipation. The state henceforth should supervise every department of life; a progressive income tax, the exclusion of aliens, the repudiation of the interest on state debts, all formed clauses of an essentially modern programme. Thus every palace, every hovel, every merchant hall, and every workshop was directly affected by the movement. The guild system was shaken to its foundations by the conflict between the Mercantile Arts and the Tradesmen's Arts, between those of the employers and those of the employed, while within each guild the 'prentices took the lead from the masters. Chaos at length produced its own cure. Labour after destroying capital found itself out of work. The Lesser Arts after they had received a moiety of political privilege rallied to the Greater, but this moiety was reduced to a quarter when the sting had been finally drawn from the lower classes. The Parte Guelfa indeed never recovered the blow, although its forms survived until the eighteenth century; but the official government emerged almost unaltered, it still rested on the Greater guilds with a partial representation of the Lesser, to the total exclusion of the Labour guilds. Nevertheless the foundations of society had really shifted. The guilds had clearly lost their meaning, had become mere formulæ, when, for a time, a separate Art had been formed for the unemployed, when young nobles pressed into the Lesser Arts to gain social support and political qualification. Henceforth the distinction is rather between rich and poor than between guild and guild;

he older corporations give way to voluntary associations of capital, to great mercantile and banking companies.

The oligarchy had successfully coped with the combination of difficulties which it encountered, and emerged triumphant. The position of the nobles and the labouring classes had deteriorated, the Lesser Arts had been bribed by a share of political representation which separated them from the lower orders, and yet really subordinated them to the higher. The wounds within the conquering party were to all appearance healed partly by binding, partly by the liberal use of the knife. Victory was complete, but it was not secure, for the official executive was as incompetent as ever to fulfil its duties, and the inherent vices of an oligarchy still remained. To give continuity of policy to the government, and vigour to its action, there must still be some power above and behind the changing constitutional authorities. In Venice a similar difficulty had been met by the conscious creation of a fresh constitutional body, the Ten, which, while leaving the ordinary administration to the regular authorities, controlled all extraordinary emergencies. In Florence, the Ten of War, appointed only to meet a crisis, had the same intention. Its institution, however, was too late, when the breach between the two parties had become too wide, and the anæmia of the executive too incurable. The Ten usually became the tool of the dominant party, and only served to weaken the supreme authority of the State, the Signoria. The reins dropped by the Parte Guelfa were

now caught up by a ring of families, which possessed no visible political position in the State, and which were themselves dominated by the house of Albizzi. The power of this family again was concentrated in the hands of a single individual, at first Maso, and then his son Rinaldo. Thus Florence was already wavering between oligarchy and monarchy, and yet neither had any official existence. It may be asked why even the ruling classes supported so despotic a family. This was partly because a strong foot was still necessary to stamp out the embers of discontent, but chiefly because Florence became involved in a life and death war with Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan, who threatened the city's existence by closing her trade routes. Maso, moreover, was a man of high ability, his liberality and geniality attracted the masses, his ruthless severity intimidated the dangerous classes or individuals. The magistracy, through which Maso must rule, was never suffered to pass out of the hands of his adherents, arbitrary taxation was the recognised reward or penalty for political opinion. The strong man, in spite of—or thanks to—his immoral measures, inspired the city with a courage which she never afterwards displayed. Florence was, perhaps, saved by the sudden death of Visconti, but that she had lived so long was due to Maso. Freed from her northern enemy, the city was threatened from the south. Ladislas of Naples, having occupied Rome, prepared to annex Tuscany. Yet in this conflict the existence of Florence hardly seemed at stake, and Maso, whose forefinger was on the people's

pulse, detected that the throb of war was lessening, and suddenly made peace. Rinaldo, who succeeded to his father's leadership, had little of his ability, and none of his fascination. His virtues were uprightness and incorruptibility, which are akin to vices in the eyes of the people, who readily weary of those who are better than themselves. He, too, was engaged in constant war with Filippo Maria Visconti, but defensive war was complicated by an aggressive attack on Lucca, which Florence would annex, even as she had annexed Pisa, in order to carry her wares uninterrupted to the seaboard. This policy was in favour of the mercantile classes, but was the cause of universal distress, which fell upon the poor. When it was too late Rinaldo consented to a reform of taxation which placed the assessment in the hands of representative local committees. The people were not grateful for the enforced concession, which alienated the richer men of the Albizzi party, who now had to pay according to their means, and not according to their politics.

An oligarchy proper (that is a state where power is confined to a wealthy minority) is subject to the danger that wealth is a more fluid element than family. Its distribution between class and class, between one group of houses and another, may shift with extreme rapidity. There is necessarily a commercial competition between the members of the leading group, and this sooner or later leads to political dissidence. The pursuit of politics becomes incompatible with the maintenance of business, on which, nevertheless, political power depends. Mer-

cantile supremacy, entailing watchful enterprise, seldom can give the leisure for the traditional education which the possession of land affords to an aristocracy of birth. No class can be quite disinterested, but the private interests of a commercial oligarchy affect a wider range in its political life, than those of an aristocracy; the former can ill afford to be purely patriotic. Wealth, moreover, has its tubers near the surface of popular affection, while family strikes its roots deep in the sentiments and habits of the underlying masses. These principles affected the fate of the Albizzi, as they will have their importance in the fortunes of the Medici. The long lane which had been leading to the Medici at length reached a turning.

The oligarchy of the Albizzi after Maso's death was never quite at accord within itself. While Rinaldo headed the more extreme section, another party leader, Niccolò da Uzzano, had a following of moderates who would have expanded rather than contracted the ruling ring, who would have anticipated personal opposition by compromising with those families whose class and mercantile interests were the same; and among these were the Medici. This house was one of the wealthy *bourgeois* families, but it enjoyed a popularity which dated from the revolution of the Ciompi. The Gonfalonier of Justice, who by his opposition to the proscriptions of the Parte Guelfa had opened the conflict, was Salvestro de' Medici. Little is known of his ability or his aims; he never pushed his original advantage. It was he, however, who had first appealed from the

palazzo to the *piazza*, and moderate as he appears o have been, he was ever afterwards a hero of the evolution: his name became inseparably connected vith the liberties of the people. Fifteen years after he outbreak and four after Salvestro's death, the ower classes besought his cousin Viero to assume heir leadership. Nor did his refusal affect the tra- itional popularity of the house. When the truggle closed almost all the Medici had been anished or excluded from office; they were regard- d as the martyrs of the people's cause. A branch, owever, distantly related to Salvestro had been e-established, and to its head, Giovanni, all the pponents of the Albizzi looked. Each of the two ections of the governing party courted his support n turn, and this potential party was swelled on the eath of Niccolò da Uzzano. Giovanni, however, ould take little part in politics, but he was none he less the architect of the fortunes of his house, for e realised that, in an oligarchy based on wealth, he ho is the wealthiest must ultimately wield the ower, and he secured the financial supremacy of his mily in Italian and European markets. His two ons Cosimo and Lorenzo reproached him with his ostention, and upon his death the duel between lbizzi and Medici could no longer be deferred. Of fference of principle there was really little. edici and Albizzi had sat together in the same agistracies, forwarded the same wars, concurred the same financial measures. Notwithstand- g the popular favour and disfavour, it would e difficult to call the Medici the democratic

and the Albizzi the oligarchic party. Parties are often difficult to define by principles. When a party is not clear what principles it possesses or may be shortly called on to profess, it denotes itself by its leader's name, which has no inconvenient connotation.

The immediate issue between Rinaldo and Cosimo was the control of the chief magistracy, the Signoria; for with this lay the power to force the Opposition from the State. Rinaldo was reserved and stingy. Cosimo was popular and he won supporters by paying their arrears of taxes and thus replacing them on the roll of citizens. Nevertheless the first trial of strength went in favour of the ruling party. Cosimo was arrested and exiled; had he not bribed the Gonfalonier of Justice, he might have lost his head. But Rinaldo was too scrupulous for a *coup d'état*; he strained the constitution, but he would not break it. He had a Balìa, a committee of reform, appointed, which seemed to give him the control of the administration. Yet in two essential points he allowed it to be fettered: it could not alter the new scheme of taxation, and could not destroy the boxes from which the names for the Signoria were drawn. Hence within a year, in September, 1434, a Signoria favourable to the Medici was drawn, and the Albizzi were lost. A new Balìa revoked the exile of Cosimo, Rinaldo who had trusted to arbitration rather than to arms was exiled with his leading followers, and on October 6, 1434, Cosimo returned to Florence.

If Florence must fall under the despotism of a single family, no house could have been found which

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI.

With portraits of the Medici family, Politian, Botticelli, and numerous Florentine citizens.
An altarpiece by Sandro Botticelli in the Uffizi Gallery.

(*From a photograph by Brogi.*)

uld so fully satisfy her needs as did the Medici. heir interests were identical with those of the ruling erchant class, of which they were the wealthiest presentatives; their first object must be the exansion of Florentine trade, for on this their banks epended. On the other hand, they were connected marriage and sympathy with several of the noble milies excluded from office, while they were popur with the lower Arts and the working classes, rtly from traditional sentiment, partly because eir wealth was lavished on labour, charity, and rruption. Thus the Medici formed the link beeen the several orders of the community; there as less feeling of class government than under the lbizzi or the Parte Guelfa.* They were popular t only in the town but in the country. Cosimo, Lorenzo after him, had a genuine interest in agrilture. He could talk to the Tuscan farmer as if had never done anything but farm. The banker ore easily becomes the country gentleman than the thier. On Cosimo's exile, as on his return, he had ceived an ovation among the peasantry of the highds through which he passed. The Medici were us a link between the country and the town.

Florence had now an extensive territory, embrag that of most of her old Tuscan rivals. To Prato d Pistoia, to Volterra, Arezzo, and Cortona, the Alzzi had added Pisa and Leghorn. Cosimo himself

*Cosimo, says Guicciardini, won his position by the power of a dful of citizens without the dissatisfaction of the public, which had dea of liberty, while at every change the middle and lower classes e the gainers. *Op. Ined.*, ii., 101.

failed indeed to conquer Lucca, but he bought Borgo San Sepolcro from Eugenius IV. and expelled the Counts of Poppi from the wide mountain region of the Casentino. Thus not only had the city realised her ambition of centuries, a firm foothold on the shores of the Tuscan Gulf, but she had extended to the water-shed of the Apennines, and indeed in the district termed Florentine Romagna, was creeping down their eastern slopes toward the Adriatic. Beyond her limits, Florence had her outposts in the persons of lesser potentates bound to her by the tie of "commendation," and rendering military service in return for her protection. These martial auxiliaries were to be found in the Roman nobles of the Ciminian and the Alban hills, but more permanently among the lordling despots of Romagna, and the old feudal families stranded on the highlands of the Lunigiana which stretch along the coast to Spezia. To these "commended" lords a personal connection with the Medici seemed more natural and more dignified, while to the subject towns, which had a rival history of their own, the rule of an individual was welcome. Pisa or Arezzo could in common subjection feel on a level with the capital; there was less chance that municipal jealousy should stifle or proscribe their trade; their prosperity and their loyalty must needs be to the advantage of a personal ruler. The Medici might well become the tie between Florence and her subjects.

Florence was not a military power. She was no match for Milan or for Naples; she could only rest upon alliances. Cosimo's banking relations gave

im an unrivalled knowledge of foreign affairs, an nequalled connection with foreign Courts. Venice nd the Marquis of Ferrara had intervened in his ehalf upon the news of his arrest. Eugenius IV., ho happened to be in Florence, had betrayed his lbizzi hosts and guided the negotiations which led Rinaldo's fall. But Medicean influence ramified r beyond the bounds of Italy. In France, England, ie Low Countries, the Levant, there were Medicean anch banks, or Medicean agents. A blow aimed the Medici gave a shock to every European arket, and hence it was the interest of foreign inces to protect their credit. Again, then, the edici were a binding element in the State.

In a city-state personal government must, in the sence of military power, depend on personality, those qualities of character which force the peo- e to recognise in the ruler their natural leader on eir own intellectual or spiritual or commercial line march. The essential is not popularity, which ay be superficial, but sympathy, which is inherent. his personal equation between ruled and ruler was e secret of the success of the Medici; it is to be und in Cosimo, in several less known members of e house, such as his brother Lorenzo, his son Gio- nni, his grandson Giuliano, and pre-eminently in renzo the Magnificent. Hence it is that the par- el between Lorenzo and Pericles is so often re- ted and so often re-asserted. The men were very fferent, their relations to the inner movements of eir age were very similar. At no time probably in e world's history, not even in the age of Augustus

or of Louis XIV., have æsthetic and intellectual ideals been so closely interwoven with political forms and material instincts as at Athens in the period of Pericles, and at Florence under the Medici. Florence had long been the chief Italian centre of arts and letters; pre-eminently, therefore, in Florentine life, the pen, the pencil, and the chisel were influential factors; consciously or unconsciously they must become instruments of political power. No family that christened its children in San Giovanni could be Philistine. The Albizzi were intelligent patrons of artists and men of letters, but never has the art of patronage been carried to such perfection as by the Medici. As in art, so it was in thought; if Cosimo and his successors could not lead, they could at least appreciate the spiritual tendencies of the day, its scepticism and formalism, its pagan regrets, its mystic aspirations. They could, without apparent inconsistency, harbour an infidel poet and burn a heretic doctor, they could found a Neo-Platonic academy and yet retain the enthusiastic support of a religious order which had its corner-stone in Aristotle and its coping in Aquinas.

Equally sympathetic is the attitude of the Medici towards the political principles or prejudices of their fellow-citizens. To the question, "Did the Medici enslave their people?" the best answer is another question, "When was their people ever free?" As far as the people is concerned it is not so much a matter of praise or blame, but of temperament or circumstance. The Florentines had in a very marked degree the sentiment of liberty, but the sentiment is

ften in inverse proportion to the possibility. The ualities which men most admire and most discuss re those precisely which they lack. There are na- ons which will always have liberty, and yet think ttle or seldom of it; there are others from whose earts and lips the idea and phrase is never absent, nd yet who never have it. Liberty is a luxury hich unadulterated is unwholesome. "Peace," ante would reiterate, "is the end of government." e knew too well that with his countrymen liberty as the worst of means to attain this end. Public berty is peculiarly difficult of attainment in a state here family feeling is exceptionally strong. The anding obstacles to liberty at Florence, wrote uicciardini, were the restlessness of each family nder control and its craving to be first. This family ide was the content of the Pandora's box which e Guelfic *bourgeoisie* looted from the defeated istocracy.

Liberty again is difficult to preserve where the ain object of the upper classes is wealth; of the wer, subsistence, and of the middle, a rise in the andard of comfort. An ambassador in Florence, a ntemporary of the Medici, clumsily paraphrased e saying attributed to Jugurtha, "A city for sale, it can find a purchaser." Florence could not have en pure and the Medici corrupt. Cosimo bought ost because he was the richest. After all liberty is t quite incompatible with venality, for all states, here there is party government, are venal—that is, e parties win support by promise of pecuniary ad- ntage to the classes or the individuals which they

address. At Florence freedom was probably impracticable, but the sentiment was fresh and strong. Florentines, moreover, possessed that peculiar sensitiveness which seems to be bred of democratic institutions, but which was developed by the light keen atmosphere, physical and intellectual, of Tuscany. Maso degli Albizzi's son had advertised his superiority, as did Lorenzo de' Medici's son hereafter. But the three first Medici realised the sensitiveness of their fellow-citizens, and respected the sentiment of equality. They lived as citizens among citizens, keeping their private buildings and entertainments, and their personal dress and bearing in republican restraint. Florence, to use Guicciardini's words, took her stand upon equality, and was full of envy; everyone was certain to be hated, who was suspected of wishing to be above his neighbours, or who made himself conspicuous by his mode of living.

The Medici have been considered as a binding element within the State, but before they could bind, they must loosen and disintegrate. A despotism will always level inequalities, will break up the solid social and political bodies which prevent the permeation of its personal influence. The guild system had already suffered much political disintegration. Cosimo carried the process farther. He raised ambitious families, such as the Pucci, from the Lesser to the Greater Arts, that their qualification for office might be multiplied. He thus deprived the Lesser Arts of their natural leaders, while he sapped the independence of the Greater. So too he broke up the sulky solidarity of the disqualified gentry. Had

ll been admitted to office they might have formed n oligarchical opposition to the monarchy. Thus, ertain families were selected for the removal of dis- ualification, and this divided the nobility, and urther trenched on the homogeneous character of he Arts. Cosimo has indeed been credited with a et more subtle motive. The noble families thus ualified rarely, wrote Guicciardini, obtained election, hile they lost their prescriptive right to a liberal hare of state commissions and legations.

As the guild system had been weakened other odies had seemed likely to serve as a focus for olitical opposition. These were especially the eligious confraternities which had been created or trengthened by the revivalist movement of the Vhite Penitents. The Albizzi had seen the political ossibilities of these bodies, and had crushed them ith unsparing rigour. Cosimo, beyond securing the upport of the clergy, does not seem to have inter- ered with associations which lay outside the political rea. He limited his despotism to essentials, and hese could be reduced to two—monopoly of the hief magistracy, and manipulation of finance. The rovisions of 1427 for periodical and impartial re- ssessment were deliberately neglected. Taxes were ssessed and levied at the arbitrary will of the ruling arty. The introduction of a graduated income tax ave opportunities for punishing enemies who were hiefly to be found among the upper classes. Every- ne was made to feel that his advancement or even is livelihood depended upon government favour. Iedicean politics were rewarded by remission of

taxation, by numerous paid offices, by government contracts, by artificial appreciation or depreciation of the state bonds. Opposition was punished by iniquitous assessment, by non-payment of interest, by the numerous obstacles which the Medicean banking firms could throw in the way of commerce. When an opponent was sufficiently humbled, the *locus penitentiæ* was pointed out.

Little or no attempt was made by Cosimo to alter the forms of government. These have so frequently to be mentioned in Lorenzo's life that it is necessary to describe them in their general outlines. The highest magistracy was the Signoria, consisting of the Gonfalonier of Justice, and the eight Priors of the Arts, or of Liberty, who held office for two months. They possessed at once the chief executive power and the sole right of initiating legislation. Next in dignity to the Signoria were the two Colleges, the twelve Buonuomini and the sixteen Gonfaloniers of the Companies, the force drawn from the four quarters of Florence in the event of internal disturbances. The Twelve and the Sixteen held office for three and four months, respectively. These three offices together were called the three greater magistracies. A proposal approved by two thirds of the Signoria and carried by a similar majority in the Colleges was then brought before the Councils of the People and of the Commune. These Councils were survivals of those of the Capitano del Popolo, the leader of the people as against the nobles, and of the Podestà, who had been originally the highest official of the city. Thus the lat-

ter continued to contain nobles, while the former contained exclusively the members of the Arts. Their numbers at this time included, respectively, some 300 and 250 members. In both, the higher magistrates of the republic sat *ex officio*, and also the Consuls of the seven Greater and fourteen Lesser Arts, while the remainder were selected in equal proportions from the four quarters of the town, but by what process it is difficult to say.

These were the permanent features of the constitution, but additional Councils are frequently mentioned. Thus in the period of the Albizzi and Cosimo de' Medici there were Councils of 200 and 131 which were consulted in all matters relating to foreign and military affairs, while since 1459 the most important Council was that of the Hundred. Henceforth the practice was that a proposal of the Signoria approved by the Colleges should be brought before the Councils of the Hundred, the People, and the Commune on three successive days, and if passed by each, the project then became law, and was registered in the public records, termed the Riformagioni. In the Councils there was little or no speaking; members could vote as they pleased, but they could not speak against a government proposal. The time limit, moreover, was an obstacle to long discussion. If a motion was not carried it could be proposed again and again on later days, and might often be passed from very weariness, or because the quorum which was present was differently composed. In all cases a majority of two thirds was requisite. Not content with this liberal allowance of Councils, the Signoria

would in most of all important cases lighten its load of responsibility by summoning a Pratica, a less formal meeting of influential citizens, subject to no definite rules of election and called into being for the immediate purpose. The system had this advantage that the executive could summon men of special knowledge or of high public character, although at the time they might hold no office; in these meetings, moreover, there was free discussion. The multiplicity of Councils detracted from the efficiency of administration under the pretence of giving a popular sanction to its acts. Membership gratified the vanity of officious busybodies, and served as a cheap governmental bribe. "Councils," wrote Machiavelli, "were invented to flatter, to give offices of no value to the State, they were no guarantee of the popular will, for the spirit of clique corrupted everything."

An important office standing outside the normal scheme of the constitution was the Ten of War, which was, however, only appointed for the purpose of conducting military and foreign affairs in time of war. This Committee was selected by the government and contained almost invariably the most important members of the dominant party; its object was to neutralise the danger caused by the possible inexperience of the Signoria elected for a short time and by a haphazard method. Another such Committee was the Eight of Watch and Ward, which may almost be termed a Ministry of Justice, though, as its main function was to deal with offences directed against the safety of the State, it had a direct politi-

cal complexion. Politics indeed in Florence were but imperfectly differentiated from law, and thus all the chief law officers had been or were also political magistrates. Such were the three governors (*rettori*), the Podestà, the Capitano, and the Executore di Giustizia. All these were foreigners, because it was of old considered impossible that a citizen should be sufficiently courageous or impartial to try his fellows. The Podestà had sunk in importance, first before the Capitano, and latterly before the Gonfalonier of Justice. He had lost the command of Florentine armies, but was still a noble lawyer of high standing who brought his trained assessors, and his suite of attendants, was liberally paid and magnificently lodged, and presided over the chief civil and criminal court of the city. The Capitano had fallen farther. Originally the noble foreign leader of the Guelfic *popolo* in its struggle against the Ghibelline nobility, he had commanded the sixteen burgher companies of the Arts and had been for a time the virtual head of the State. Now, however, he was confined to the presidency of a court of summary jurisdiction over the populace; he was, in fact, the chief police magistrate, and was to sink yet lower. The Executor of Justice had also worn his functions threadbare. Once the foreign Guelfic burgher who had ruthlessly executed the penalties imposed by the democracy upon the nobles, he was now little more than the governor of the gaol. Apart from these officials stood the board of the Mercanzia, a court for the decision of all cases connected with commerce. With less outward dig-

nity its bench of Six, presided over by a foreign lawyer, was probably the most important civil court in Florence.

It is clear that the essential object of a political party was to control the election of the Signoria, which alone could initiate and execute, and which in dealing with administrative emergencies had almost absolute powers, if only it dared to use them; if only its members could depend upon protection when their short term of office was passed. The method of election to the Signoria will apply generally to all the numerous offices in Florence, for there were in all some forty or fifty boxes or purses (*borse*) in which the names of candidates for office were placed. The first process was the scrutiny, or examination of the candidates' qualifications. Who under normal constitutional circumstances held this scrutiny is far from clear, chiefly because such circumstances rarely, if ever, occurred, but this duty probably belonged to the Councils or their nominees. Sufficient names were selected to last for several years, a strict proportion being preserved between the several quarters, while for each name from the Lesser Arts, three were included from the Greater. Theoretically every member of the Arts was eligible, if not specially disqualified, but practically the names were selected from a comparatively limited range of houses. Many men had not the time nor the wish to serve, others were wanting in sense or popularity. From the box so filled with some 400 names, the constitutional practice was that the Signoria should be drawn by the presumably

impartial hand of a friar. If the individuals thus drawn had no relations in the greater offices, if they were of due age, if they had paid their taxes, and were not otherwise disqualified, they were taken as elected. Such a chance method was obviously dangerous to the party in power. There was no guarantee that safe names should be placed in the boxes, while it takes much less than five years to change a politician's party and his principles. Hence elaborate methods were devised to control these boxes. The sitting Signoria had the power of summoning a Parlamento, or gathering of the whole resident population of Florence. This was a survival of the earliest political institutions of the town, going far back beyond Guelfs and Ghibellines, beyond Arts and crafts. It was a recognition that power in the last instance issued from the people, and that for any fundamental change of government the commission of the people was required. But popular survivals are not always wholesome. What actually occurred was this. The great bell of the *palazzo* rang. Curiosity or a *pour-boire* tempted the idler and more thirsty inhabitants to the chief *piazza.* The approaches were well guarded by mercenaries, and the armed adherents of the ruling party. The Signoria appeared upon its platform outside the palace; it enquired whether two thirds of the Florentine people were present; "Yes, yes," was the immediate reply. "Do you consent that a Balìa (a commission of reform) be appointed, which shall have all the power of the Florentine people and its delegates?" Again the bystanders roared "Yes,

yes." "Do you approve of the names of the following gentlemen?" And to each name was howled "Yes, yes." The Signoria retired to its palace, the Florentine people to their homes or taverns. The Balìa among other functions broke the boxes and refilled them. Frequently, for the purpose of election, it would appoint a sub-committee, the Accoppiatori. The duty of these was occasionally to select names for the boxes, but always as the time came round for the appointment of a Signoria to select the names in place of the haphazard system of the lot. The Balìa was appointed for a definite period, and the Accoppiatori whom the Balìa commissioned might outlive itself.

This method of bringing the executive into harmony with the dominant party was not peculiar to Florence; in some states it had become the rule rather than the exception. Nor at Florence was it the invention of the Medici. They, however, systematised the practice, for under Cosimo at the close of each five years a Balìa was proposed, so that he might never lose touch of the Signoria. Nevertheless there remained two elements of opposition to the development of Medicean monarchy. The sentiment of liberty was so far strong that, when in 1445 the war against Alfonso of Naples ceased, the Councils almost unanimously decided that the Signoria should again be drawn by lot. On the other hand the influential families who recalled the Medici had never contemplated a monarchy. Their ideal of government was a ring, a syndicate of houses, to exploit the State. Thus they combined with the constitutionalists to humble Cosimo. They were

however, hoist with their own petard, for they found that they were being ousted from the government by their new allies, while Cosimo, too prudent to oppose the liberal movement, rejoiced in their discomfiture. The crisis came in the year 1458, and this may be called the first political lesson which Lorenzo was taught, for he was now a boy of nine, and living in his grandfather's house was fully able to appreciate the situation. The Constitutionalists gained a great victory; they restored the Catasto of 1427, and then carried a bill that a Balìa should never be proposed except with the unanimous consent of the Signoria and the Colleges, and the approval of the Councils of the People, the Commune, and the Two Hundred. The Catasto aimed a blow at the oligarchical ring which had hitherto manipulated the taxes for its own benefit. This ring now realised that it must fall without Cosimo's support, and he himself had probably determined that it was time to make a stand. Yet he would not risk his popularity by prominently appearing in the conflict. At the close of 1457, had died Neri Capponi, a citizen respected for his military and diplomatic services, and who almost alone had ventured to oppose the Medicean extremists. With his moderate opponent Cosimo had remained on friendly terms, providing only that the Condottiere Baldaccio da Anghiari, Capponi's close friend, should be thrown from the Palace windows in Capponi's absence. In the government Cosimo had set up against this friendly rival the wealthy Luca Pitti, vivacious, ambitious, headstrong, and not devoid of some of the qualities of a party leader. It was Luca Pitti who

was now set, or set himself, to stem the flowing tide of liberalism. In July, when Gonfalonier of Justice, he proposed in the Councils that the boxes should be burnt, and the Signoria drawn by hand, but he was beaten. On his own authority he then called a Parlamento. Every preparation had been made. The lord of Faenza and other condottieri with professional horse and foot were encamped outside the gates. Armed peasants, devoted to the Medici, poured down from the mountains. Piero came to Florence to join his father, leaving his family in the villa of Cafaggiuolo safe in the guard of their retainers in the Mugello. On an August morning the great bell of the Palace tolled, the people crowded to the *piazza*. Here there was a pageant to delight the mob. On two sides of the great square were posted some 300 horse and 6000 foot, while 2000 armed citizens, adherents of the Medici, stood at the street corners prepared to block the arteries through which circulated the blood of Florence to the heart of the great city. Within the Palace were Cosimo and Piero, surrounded by soldiers, overawing the possible opposition of liberal magistrates. The halls of the guilds were utilised as barracks. The Signoria appeared on its platform. The Chancellor read the proposal for the Balìa, and the list of the 350 members who were associated with the Priors. The people shouted assent, the *fête* was over, and the great square slowly emptied. Unanimity had been complete; disturbances there were none. "If I had not been present," wrote the Podestà, a Milanese, to his Duke, "I could never

PIERO DE' MEDICI THE ELDER.

Portrait bust by Mino da Fiesole in the Bargello at Florence.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

have believed that so huge a crowd could have assembled, after the recent troubles, without some row." For his own part in this successful drama the Podestà was rewarded with an additional six months of office. The Balìa lasted for six months, it filled the boxes for five years, appointed Accoppiatori who should select the Signoria for seven years. Taxation was remodelled, and the Eight of Watch and Ward was converted into a permanent Ministry. Exile and disqualification from office were the penalties of the Constitutionalists. To celebrate the Medicean victory, the Priors of the Arts were henceforth named the Priors of Liberty. Increased importance was added to the Gonfalonier of Justice; he now sat in the middle of his colleagues, instead of to their right; he received the banner of the state no longer from the Podestà but from the outgoing Gonfalonier. The last and most important act of the Balìa was the creation of a new permanent Council, the Hundred, composed of the chief citizens of the governing party, and elected by those who had been drawn as Gonfaloniers of Justice since 1434. It was believed that such a Council could deal effectively with affairs of state, while it controlled the selection of candidates for the chief magistracies.*

* It is held on high authority that the Hundred was a survival of great antiquity. I must, however, accept the definite statement of Lampi and Ammirato that it was a new creation of 1459. I find no trace of its existence under the Albizzi, or during the first twenty-five years of Cosimo's rule. The very Balla of 1458 was carried in the Councils of the People, the Commune, and the Two Hundred. From 1459 to 1494 the existence of the Hundred is continuous.

The government honestly paid its tribute to the masses who had applauded its drastic measures; it built model dwelling-houses of stone for the ill-lodged and over-crowded populace.

To this *coup d' état* Lorenzo owed his future power. The Medici were twice again attacked from within their party, but never until the younger Piero's fall were they endangered by opposition from without the ring. Yet it was not clear to the public that Cosimo was the conqueror. Henceforth until his death he was little before the public eye, his health was broken by gout, his spirits clouded by domestic troubles, by the loss of his favourite and most capable son Giovanni. The hero of the hour was Luca Pitti. Knighted by the people, with presents showered upon him by the rich, he fancied that he might buy the working classes, and shoulder out the declining Medici. Upon the southern slopes of the Arno began to rise the gigantic palace that should dominate the city, and reduce to ridicule the modest mansion in the Via Larga. But success depends less on great ends than on appropriate means. It was doubtless to Pitti that Cosimo used his well-known phrase: "You follow the infinite, and I the finite; you lay your ladders in the sky and I lean them close to earth lest I may fly so high that I may fear to fall." The old Medici let his rival go his way. "You and I," he had once said, "are just like two great dogs who rush at each other and then pause and sniff. As both have teeth each passes on his way. Look to your own business; I will attend to mine."

The rule of the first Medici was unquestionably cruel. Not much blood indeed was spilled. The Florentines were not bloodthirsty. When Baldaccio was dashed upon the pavement it made a great and painful sensation; elsewhere it would have been an agreeable incident in a working day. Some eighty families, however, are known to have been driven into exile, and many more were ruined. Much of this ill work was done indeed before Cosimo returned. Much may be attributed to the extremists of the party who outpaced their leader. These were sometimes rivals such as Pitti, but at others Cosimo's own adherents of low class. Before his accession to power his party had been nicknamed "Puccini," after the family who, while pushing their own political and financial fortunes, were prepared to take upon their shoulders the responsibility for measures which might bring unpopularity upon their patrons. Cosimo would never make an unnecessary enemy; he never carried revenge beyond the limits of reason. On the other hand he was callous to suffering, and knew no ruth; he never spared, if it was prudent to destroy. Naturally, almost unconsciously, he would himself express his cynical theory of government: "Better to spoil a city than to lose it." "A government cannot be maintained by paternosters."

Cosimo's private life formed a curious contrast to the methods of his government. He was the ideal head of a wealthy *bourgeois* household, extremely simple in his personal habits, impressing above all things on the younger generations the necessity of

family trust and affection, refusing to make a will, because he would rather rely on the love of his children for each other. Unlike Lorenzo, he was grave and serious by nature, disliking gambling and amusements, inclined to silence, though endowed with caustic wit. The ruler who demoralised his people, and ruined his enemies, felt earnestly the seriousness of life, the need of preparing for its end; he would spend hours in his little room at St. Mark's convent, conversing with Saint Antonino, the holiest and most sensible of archbishops, planning schemes for munificent donations to the Church. With his fellow-citizens from highest to lowest he was familiar and conversational, concealing every trace of the superior position which he had usurped. He was an admirable man of business, never neglecting the complex fortunes of his firm, whatever the claims of politics upon his time; economy of time was in fact the chief secret of his success. "Greedy of time was he," wrote Marsilio Ficino, the Platonist, "as Midas was of gold." Notwithstanding his business faculties, he was, perhaps, at his best among artists and men of letters, not indeed possessing the artistic temperament of his grandson, but displaying intelligence and judgment second to no other patron.

Both Albizzi and Medici owed their peculiar power in great degree to the exigencies of international relations; it was natural, therefore, that each family should have its separate foreign policy. Cosimo trod at first to all appearance in his predecessor's footsteps, inheriting alliance with Venice, and hostility towards Milan. Nevertheless he soon secretly

utilised his friendship with Francesco Sforza, who was at once Filippo Maria Visconti's condottiere and his son-in-law, to secure the friendship of the Duke of Milan. On the death of Filippo Maria in 1447 Cosimo's secret policy stood confessed. Upon the events of the next few years hangs all Italian history down to the great catastrophe of 1494. Filippo Maria had promised the reversion of his Duchy to Francesco Sforza, but had made a codicil to his will in favour of the King of Naples. Meanwhile the Duke of Orleans pressed his claims in the right of his mother Valentina Visconti, and was recommended by the Duke of Burgundy and the Dauphin Louis. The Duke of Savoy also meditated possibilities of annexation or partition, while the Emperor Frederick III. insisted that in default of heirs male the Duchy had reverted to the Empire. Milan herself proclaimed a republic, arguing that on the extinction of the dynasty the power lapsed to the original grantors, the people. The most dangerous competitor was Venice, determined to push her dominion to the westward, and the banners of St. Mark at once fluttered to and across the Adda. Sforza's party in Milan was infinitesimal; his sole hope lay in the support of Cosimo, he could control the military market if only he could be financed. It seemed natural that Florence should either continue her alliance with Venice, or seize the opportunity of crushing the Lombard despotism, her traditional enemy, by aiding the Milanese republic to throw off its yoke. This is still the theme of sentimentalist historians. Cosimo, however, knew

better. Republicanism in Lombardy was a disintegrating force. Pavia had already declared her independence, while other towns were opening their gates to Venice. Not a city would long have served the magistrates of Milan. The republics of the old Lombard league were bound together by a purely personal tie. This tie unloosed there was nothing left to bind them, or to control the hostile Guelfic and Ghibelline parties within each town. A score of cities fighting with each other and within themselves would have been a tempting bait to France, or her great princely houses, or to the martial dynasty of Savoy already in the field.

Even more dangerous to Florence was the certain advance of Venice, which had already secured in Lodi the command of the Adda, and in Piacenza the one great passage of the Po, which placed the main southern road, with its long string of thriving towns, at her disposal. Venice, far stronger at this moment than either France or Savoy, must have pushed her frontier to the western Alps, and southward to the Papal frontier. Sforza, the greatest Italian soldier, who already had his roots well struck in Lombardy and the March, could alone withstand her, and that only by Florentine aid. It was no mere matter of territorial aggrandisement in which Florence had slight concern. It was a question of life and death to the trading community, and Cosimo from his matchless intimacy with the labyrinth of commerce knew this. Venetian monopoly would have covered the north and east of Italy, and excluded Florentine wares from France, Germany, and the Adriatic.

Thus it was that under Cosimo's influence Florentine money was poured forth like water to place Sforza on the throne, and to maintain him in the war against Venice and Naples which followed his promotion.

In carrying through this revolution in foreign policy Cosimo had encountered constant opposition among his fellow-citizens. They realised that this new system of foreign alliance had its domestic consequences, that it was the alliance of the dynasties against the republican principle; that, as Francesco by Cosimo's aid had strangled the infant Milanese republic, so the Sforza would aid the Medici in anticipating the natural decease of the senile liberties of Florence. Hence it was that the alliance of Florence and Milan, which was to remain the sheet-anchor of Medicean policy, was never popular at Florence. Venice, to whom Cosimo owed an asylum in his exile, and support on his return, never forgave the Medici. The internal troubles which endangered his supremacy were fostered by Venetian intrigue, and after his death the lagoons still served as the breeding ground for the plots of Florentine exiles. Yet Cosimo was doubtless prudent. It was ere long recognised that Venice was the aggressive power, that the Sforza occupied a weaker position than the Visconti, that Francesco and his successors were a defensive dynasty, threatened at once from France and Germany, that its interests lay in Italian peace, and in the exclusion of the foreigner.

Another important consequence was entailed by the Florentine-Milanese alliance. The Aragonese

dynasty which had established itself at Naples at the expense of the house of Anjou had always found an enemy in Florence. This was due partly to the Guelfic Angevin traditions, and partly to the ambitions of the dynasty which was ever, as its predecessors, striving to obtain a hold on Tuscany, to which design Siena, waning in importance before her Florentine rival, readily lent herself. Milan also had originally combated this dynasty, but Alfonso, its first ruler, had as a prisoner persuaded Filippo Maria Visconti that, if Naples became the object of French attack, Lombardy would be the first to suffer. The new alliance was naturally broken by Sforza's seizure of the Duchy of Milan in defiance of Alfonso's claim. But with two such prudent rulers personal considerations must sooner or later give place to political interests. Both powers were jealous of Venice, both threatened with French aggression, for if the Aragonese was endangered by the claim of Anjou, the Sforza must dread the revival of the house of Orleans, whose garrison in its dower town of Asti was a standing menace to the Milanese. Florence therefore, if she were to remain the ally of Milan, must also surrender her Angevin sympathies for friendship with the Kings of Naples. Thus developed the idea of the Triple Alliance for the maintenance of peace in Italy, of which much will be heard hereafter. If the friendship of Milan and Naples could be secured, the Medici might hope to annex the little republic of Lucca to the north, which had received protection from the Visconti, and the larger state of Siena to the south, which had

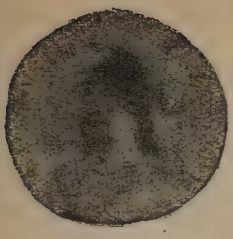
found succour in Naples. Supported by both powers, moreover, Florence could check Venetian advance in Romagna, by affording her protection to the small independent dynasties at Faenza and Forlì, at Rimini and Pesaro, might even herself creep timidly across the Apennines and set herself astride of the great high-road that skirts the mountains and the Adriatic.

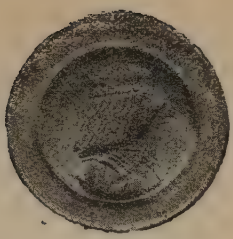
With three powers in permanent opposition to Venice, but one of the five great states of Italy remained to be considered. Upon the Papacy none could calculate, its policy depended on the changing aims of each successive Pope. It is true that the Popes were the natural leaders of the old Guelfic party, and therefore the natural enemies of the Sforza who had succeeded to the Ghibelline Visconti, and yet more hostile to the Aragonese who derived a claim from the Hohenstauffen. Naples, moreover, admitted the suzerainty of the Pope, and this very fact, together with a long stretch of common frontier, and such disputed towns as Benevento and Terracina, gave rise to frequent friction. Thus the natural impulse of the Papacy was to lean towards Venice. Such were the relations, more or less permanent, of the Italian states. It is a commonplace to speak of the balance of the five powers, and of Florence, as lying geographically between north and south, and constitutionally between monarchy and republic, as its tongue. It is, moreover, true, that if any one of the rival states acquired excessive weight the others would combine to correct the balance, and that Italy was steadied by unceasing oscillation. Neverthe-

less, though in alliances the permutation of commutations was possible, the combination of the three powers was tolerably constant, and within this triple alliance the Medici maintained the balance between the two stronger monarchies.

Florence.

Medici.





Alfonso of Naples—Ferrante of Naples.

CHAPTER II.

Accession of Piero de' Medici to power—Introduction of Lorenzo to public life—Opposition to the Medici—The Neroni conspiracy—The Colleonic war—Lorenzo's tournament—His marriage—His visit to Milan.

1464–1469.

UPON the death of Cosimo, Lorenzo's public career began. His father, Piero, had not the push of his predecessor and successor; he was either more scrupulous or less ambitious. Miserable health, moreover, frequently forced him into complete retirement. While Piero nursed his gout and fostered his banking business in his villa at Careggi, the city became accustomed to regard his two brilliant sons as the active representatives of the party. Lorenzo was now fifteen. His childhood had been his initiation; he was well prepared to enter into the mysteries of power. It would be pitiful to compare the mental atmosphere of the son of a prince or a millionaire of to-day with that of the young Medici. Life for

him already had its interests beyond the daily round of games which have become its object, beyond the common tasks which form their unwelcome interruption. Lorenzo had been the constant companion of his father and grandfather. All the characteristics of the elder man had left their unconscious impress upon a nature singularly impressionable. To his mother Lorenzo believed that he owed yet more. Lucrezia Tornabuoni was descended from a noble Florentine house which had abandoned its gentility in order to be qualified for public office. Her grandfather had attached himself to the Medici, and his family had a full share in their prosperity. Lucrezia herself took charge of the religious education of her children; an evening visit to the oratory of St. Paul was one of Lorenzo's daily duties. For them she wrote the hymns which take a high rank among spiritual poems. Yet she was no bigot. Her love for poetry was not confined to its religious side. Her encouragement inspired the great poem of Pulci, which Savonarola burnt and even the Papacy condemned. She was no dreamer, nor yet a domestic drudge, but a capable woman of business, Lorenzo's surest counsellor until her death. Enemies would say that her very charities, her endowments of poor convents, her dowers to needy girls, her abundant alms, were counters in the game of politics.

In his grandfather's house Lorenzo had met on familiar terms statesmen, financiers, ambassadors and princes, artists, and men of letters. This was in itself an education, for Italians, unlike the English of that age, were gentle and sympathetic towards

LUCREZIA (TORNABUONI) DE' MEDICI.

Portrait in the Berlin Museum by Sandro Botticelli.

children. His tutor was Gentile Becchi, who became Bishop of Arezzo. Gentile came to Florence from Urbino, the petty principality, whose Court under Federigo of Montefeltro was a focus of refinement. Gentile proved himself at times a pedant; he attributed extravagant importance to the exquisite Latinity of his laboured speeches. But he was a pedant and something more; his sense and insight rendered him a valued diplomatist in the Courts of Italy and in France. Nor again was Lorenzo's education entrusted solely to the Latinist. He learnt, it is said, Greek at first hand from Argyropulos, while among his teachers were Ficino, the head of the Platonic Academy, and Landino, the translator of Aristotle and commentator of Dante. This was, indeed, a liberal training. A boy so educated would now be dubbed a prig. But the prig is he whose intellectual pretensions unfit him for the society in which his lot is cast. Such an education was not uncommon among the upper classes at Florence, conducted, it is true, in the Medici household under peculiar advantages. There was at all events no lack of athletic interests. Lorenzo could play football, and that Italian form of fives named *pallone* to which his son Piero devoted only too much attention. From earliest years he had a healthy passion for thoroughbreds, dogs and falcons, which he preserved until his dying day. Not content with the popularity gained, without personal risk, by his fine racing stud, he was himself a bold rider, and excelled in tournaments which exacted dexterity, if they entailed no danger.

Lorenzo's name is associated with all forms of loveliness, yet his physical personality was peculiarly unlovely. He was, indeed, above the middle height and strongly built; but his face was undeniably plain, the nose flat and spreading, the chin sharp, the complexion sallow, the eyes weak. His movements were exaggerated and ungainly, his voice harsh and croaking. That he was almost without the sense of smell was not wholly to his disadvantage, even though the Florence of his century were as sweetly scented as it is to-day. Lorenzo suffered, moreover, from comparison with his brother Giuliano who was some four years younger, and was tall, strong, and handsome, with bright eyes and rich, black curling hair. His sisters too were beautiful, if their mother's authority can be accepted. Of these, Bianca was already married to Guglielmo Pazzi, of whom more anon. The younger sister, Nannina, was in 1466 wedded to Bernardo Rucellai, an enviable match, if high character, intellectual refinement, and a beautiful garden were the sole constituents of matrimonial happiness. These marriages have their interest as illustrations of the older Medicean policy. The Pazzi and the Rucellai were typical families in Florentine society. The former was an old rural noble house which had, from force or inclination, transferred its headquarters to the town, and had diverted its military energies into commercial channels. A connection with the Pazzi was productive alike of profit and prestige. The Rucellai, on the other hand, were by origin plebeian; they had acquired their fortune and their

name from experiments in the purple dye named *oricello*. The younger generations were characterised by the captious over-refinement, the negative criticism, which are frequently the fruit of a cross between high culture and low breeding. The paradise of the Rucellai gardens had its serpents in aimless ambition and indefinite discontent.

Piero succeeded to his father's position as though it were his hereditary right. This did, however, excite surprise, and from surprise sprang opposition. It was the old story. Those who organised revolt belonged to the more intimate Medicean circle; the oligarchical element in the system resented the growth of the monarchical. The leaders of the opposition were four in number. Agnolo Acciaiuoli had suffered exile in Cosimo's cause, and had floated to the surface on the restoration of 1434. He had a long record of good diplomatic service, though Louis XI. thought him too vain and talkative. The motives of his action were mainly personal. The archbishopric of Pisa had been refused to one son, another had lost a suit on a question of inheritance, and every verdict of the courts was ascribed to Medicean spite or favour. Agnolo moreover coveted a closer connection with the Medici, and Nannina's betrothal to Rucellai robbed him of a daughter-in-law. The motives of Niccolò Soderini were probably purer. His father had been hung for forging documents to prove his own legitimacy. Niccolò and his brother Tommaso accused their uncle, who was a partisan of the Albizzi, of causing this misfortune, and threw themselves without reserve into the arms of the

Medici. Tommaso had married the sister of Piero's wife, and both brothers had been Gonfalonier of Justice more than once. Niccolò however was an idealist, his imagination opened only to the sunny side of history, his fancy pictured a Florence that had once been free. Diotisalvi Neroni was the brain of the opposition. His family owed much to the "spoils system" of the Medici; the archbishopric of Florence had been given to his brother. Cosimo placed implicit confidence in Diotisalvi, and had recommended his son to rely upon his counsels. The ostensible head, however, of every malcontent party must be Luca Pitti, who in wealth, connections, and employment of labour, stood second only to the Medici. Even under Cosimo he had posed as ruler of the State, he was little likely to brook the sway of a feebler junior. Revolution therefore was threatened not from a younger generation but from an older. Its leaders were the contemporaries of Cosimo rather than of Piero. And this is probably why it failed, for fortune, wrote Machiavelli, being a woman favours violence, and the young are violent. Violence indeed is the key to successful Revolution. Of this there was as yet little sign. While the *partie carrée* of respectable sexagenarians and septuagenarians were whipping up the memories of the past, Lorenzo was luring the youth of Florence with the pleasure of the present and the profit of the future.

The advantage at first was with the malcontents. It was the practice of the Medici upon the death of the head of the firm to close their accounts, that

they might, in the words of a Milanese ambassador, take soundings to determine in how many feet of water they were floating. Diotisalvi suggested that this was an opportunity to call in their debts, and Piero, listening to his father's friend, consented to his cost. The mercantile world subsisted upon credit; a sudden demand to realise and meet engagements brought many leading firms to ruin or its verge. "Here," wrote Alessandra Strozzi to her son at Naples, "everything is upside down, what with those who have already failed, and others who are 'crocky.' (*) The power of the Medici was based on popularity, and this upon the purse. Piero became at once unpopular, it availed him little that he saved many from the bankruptcy which he himself had caused. Finance was certain to react on politics.

Neither the Medici nor their rivals had any official constitutional standpoint. It was no tug of war between government and opposition. The governing faction had split into two sections which soon received the classical names of the Mountain and the Plain, for Luca Pitti's elephantine palace was already rising on the hillside of San Giorgio, while the more modest Medicean mansion lay snug and square upon the level. The electoral boxes contained indiscriminately the names of adherents of Plain and Mountain, indeed the latter, as being the older men; were probably the more numerous. It was over the boxes that the first skirmish was fought, and the ground was skilfully chosen. It was proposed that

(*) "Crocchiano" a metaphor derived, as with us, from a state of health.

the names of the magistrates should once again be drawn by lot. The Medici did not dare oppose a measure which excited popular enthusiasm to a dangerous extent. It was not unnaturally believed that this success was a death-blow to their supremacy which had admittedly depended on the control of the Signoria.

This victory was closely followed by another. The Signoria for October was favourable to Pitti's party, and Niccolò Soderini was Gonfalonier. He was escorted by the crowd to the Palace with an olive wreath upon his head; the republic, if it ever existed, seemed restored. His brother, however, prophesied that "Niccolò would make his entrance like a lion and his exit like a lamb." The Gonfalonier had a reformer's reverence for his own eloquence. He was so certain of success that he talked instead of acting. Believing the heart of the people to be with him he summoned five hundred citizens to the Palace, and in a long speech invited them to discuss the situation. The Florentines were by nature conversational, but had few opportunities of practising their gifts. Owing to the absence of debate in the Councils there was no professional school of parliamentary eloquence. But now the situation must be discussed by five hundred amateurs, the majority of whom scarcely realised what the situation was. The committee was indeed ere long replaced by one of three hundred, but the excluded minority consisted probably of the more silent members.

Soderini feeling the conversational method of re-

form to be a failure, passed to the other extreme and proposed that the Council of the Hundred should be abolished. Success would have entailed the fall of the Medici; they fought desperately and the Gonfalonier was beaten. He failed also in an imprudent proposal for an enquiry into the financial measures of the recent administration. On this point opposition proceeded not so much from the Medicean party, as from his own ally, Luca Pitti, who felt himself involved. A proposal was then carried that the electoral boxes should be filled afresh. It was hoped that the committee in the present state of feeling would find pretexts to exclude the Medicean candidates. This, however, was a tedious process which must long outlast the existing Signoria. Parties were too evenly divided to ensure success, and Piero, notwithstanding his ill-health, regularly attended the meetings of the committee, and his silent presence thwarted dishonest processes. Before long Soderini himself voted for the abandonment of the scheme.

To spur flagging enthusiasm the Gonfalonier suggested that he should be knighted by the people. Such a distinction would stamp his gonfalonierate as a success, his programme would receive the people's *imprimatur*. This measure passed the Council of the People, but was rejected by the Council of the Commune, a most unusual circumstance, which added ridicule to failure. Soderini increased his own discomfiture by a long, angry speech. He retired from office a discredited politician, a man of big words and small deeds, one who meant well, but knew not what he meant. The one attempt to eject

the Medici by constitutional measures had failed. On the night of the retirement of the Signoria the Mediceans celebrated their success by bonfires of faggots on the *piazza*, while early risers saw placarded on the walls "Nine fools are out." Henceforth the popular leader strove to stimulate pity by parading the streets under armed protection. His life, he professed, was threatened by those wild Conti of the Maremma with whom he had become entangled in a cattle-slaying war. But it was intended to be understood that the Conti had an understudy in the Medici.

In the field of constitutional reform the party struggle had been fought to a standstill. The conflict was in the spring of 1465 transferred to the wider area of foreign policy, and here Lorenzo took a more prominent, if not more active, part. It has been seen that Cosimo had effected a revolution in the relations of Florence to her neighbours, that the city of the Arno had broken with the republic of the Lagoons, that she discouraged the Angevin cause as being a disturbing element to the peace of Italy, and that she regarded the triple alliance of Naples, Milan, and herself as the guarantee for internal peace, and the avoidance of foreign invasion. To this policy Pope Pius II. had persuaded Cosimo, deserting himself the traditional Guelfic sympathies of the Papacy, and holding out a hand to its natural enemy the Aragonese dynasty of Naples. On the other hand the Pope's zeal for the Crusade against the Turks attached to him the Venetians, sceptical as they might be of its practical results. Pius, how-

ever, had died a fortnight after Cosimo, and it was feared that his successor Paul II., a member of the Venetian house of Barbo, might add dangerous weight to the influence of Venice.

Thus it was that diplomatic intercourse between Florence and the Courts of Milan and Naples was peculiarly active in the early months of Piero's *régime*. The bonds of the Milanese Neapolitan alliance were tightened by the marriage of Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, King Ferrante's heir, with Ippolita Maria, the daughter of Francesco Sforza. In April Lorenzo went to Pisa to receive Don Federigo, Alfonso's younger brother, who was to escort the bride to Naples. The two youths formed a close friendship which lasted throughout Lorenzo's life. In Florence, however, the Neapolitan prince found little favor. His nobles and his 600 horse were all in mourning for the late Queen of Naples, there were no trumpets and no bright clothes. It was held also "a little too much" that the Prince did not dismount at the platform of the Palace, where the Signoria waited to receive him; he was indeed a king's son, but not the eldest born. The Florentines in their heart of hearts detested the Aragonese dynasty with their Spanish pride.

This visit produced a lull in internal discord. Neroni was commissioned to represent his republic in the marriage festivities at Milan, and here he was knighted by the Duke. It would seem that both Duke and King, seeing how evenly Florence was divided, strove to secure the favour of either party. Lorenzo also travelled northwards, with Guglielmo

Pazzi. They were magnificently entertained at Bologna by Giovanni Bentivoglio, and at Ferrara by Borso d'Este. From Venice they returned to Milan for the wedding. Piero's letters to his son during this journey prove how much importance was attached to it; they are an admirable example of the blending of the homely *bourgeois* with the astute statesman, a characteristic feature of the Medici. Lorenzo was besought not to stint in entertainment, for which purpose a supply of plate was forwarded, but he must take heed not to outshine and so annoy the principals; he must remember to be in word and deed a man and not a boy, for the journey was the test of his ability, the preparation for more important missions. "Tell Guglielmo" wrote the warm-hearted father, "not to forget us altogether, and do not give so much thought to those festivities as to forget your home. You must return a few days before the wedding party, for I shall have the Princess in the house, and without you and Guglielmo, I should be as a man without his hands."

It was a triumph for Piero that the Signoria requested him to entertain the bridal party; the Medici were still, at least in foreign relations, the ostensible representatives of the State. After leaving Florence the bride and her escort were stopped by horrible news which shocked even the cynical moral sense of Italy. Piccinino, the last great condottiere of the older school, had been invited to Naples by Ferrante, had been caresssed and foully murdered. Francesco Sforza under whose guarantee Piccinino had visited his former enemy, was rightly or wrongly

LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

As a youth riding under a bay tree. From a fresco of the *Procession of the Magi* by Benozzo Gozzoli in the chapel of the Riccardi, or Medici, Palace.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

suspected of complicity in the fate of the rival of his fighting days. But he professed profound disgust, and for two months his daughter halted at Siena. The existence of the Triple Alliance seemed hanging in the balance.

Lorenzo meanwhile had passed the test of his Milanese mission to his father's satisfaction, and was in the spring of 1466 employed in negotiations of greater moment. He was sent to Rome, nominally on business matters connected with the contract for the Papal alum mines, one of the most profitable branches of Medicean speculation. No sooner had he arrived than he heard the news of Francesco Sforza's death. The heir to the Duchy was absent in France, engaged in the war of Public Weal ; the barons were driving Louis XI. within the walls of Paris, and the young Sforza, in the hope of creating a diversion, was attacking the territories of the Duke of Bourbon. His father had no title but his own ability, and this Galeazzo Maria had not inherited. Feeble as was the Emperor Frederick III. he had strength enough to refuse investiture of the wealthy Duchy ; the shadowy reversion might readily, under a more powerful Hapsburg, become a substantial possession. On the death of Francesco's predecessor the King of Naples and the Dukes of Orleans and Savoy had all pressed their claims, while the arms of Venice had been carried to the walls of Milan. The delicate fabric of the Italian balance of power was tottering.

In this emergency Piero de' Medici displayed unwonted energy, pledging himself and the State to

uphold the Sforza dynasty. To his son, however, he wrote in deep depression, which he warned Lorenzo to avoid, for the remedy was not melancholy, which profits nought, but thought. The pleasure-loving boy was urged to put away the sounds of instruments, of singing and dancing; he must be old before his time, for the need was sore. Lorenzo became a serious diplomatist, and could soon assure his father that the Pope was in the interest of peace. Paul II., with his passion for gems and games, for pomp and pageant, was no disturber of the repose of Italy.

Peace was, indeed, endangered not by the ambition of French or Italian prince, but by the restless intrigue of Neroni and his party. In the Italian crisis they saw their opportunity; they would reverse the foreign policy of the party of which they had been leading members, return to a Venetian alliance, and, if they could not win Ferrante to their cause, encourage King René's son, to make a fresh attempt on Naples. But their ground was chosen with extreme imprudence. The strength of the Medici lay in their foreign relations, and this was due, not to the power of their party, but to their personal influence. Sforza was ready to return the aid which Piero had rendered to himself. Lorenzo was enthusiastically received at Naples. Jacopo Acciaiuoli warned his father that Ferrante's caresses were caused by the belief that the Medici would serve his purpose better than their opponents. Louis XI. devoted to Piero had momentarily relieved himself from princely opposition by the treaty of Conflans; he was determined that the house of Orleans,

whose practical leader was the capable bastard Dunois, should not incorporate the Milanese. For John of Calabria employment was found in Spain; the Catalans, in revolt against Ferrante's uncle John, offered to revive the long dormant claims of René to the crown of Aragon, and during this enterprise the adventurous heir to the claims of Anjou found his death. The opposition was thus reduced to the possibility of aid from Venice. The Venetians, however, were too busy with their disastrous Turkish war to break up the Italian peace. Of more immediate importance was the action of Borso d'Este who moved Ferrarese horse and foot under his brother Ercole to Fiumalba in the direction of Pistoia. This produced the crisis. Piero was at Careggi, some four miles from Florence, ill with gout. Here he heard the news of the advance of the Ferrarese troops from an express sent by Bentivoglio from Bologna. Acting with great promptitude he begged the Milanese commander in Romagna to cross the mountains in his support. Fearful, meanwhile, of surprise by the Ferrarese horse, and hearing somewhat of his opponent's schemes he was carried in his litter into Florence on the morning of August 23, 1466. The story runs that, the Mountain had determined to kill or kidnap the head of Medici, and that they had placed armed men in ambush in the Archbishop Neroni's villa near the Badia, which Piero must pass on his way to the Porta Faenza. Lorenzo, riding in advance, was questioned by ill-looking men, and, telling them that Piero was following, sent back a messenger to warn

him to make for another gate. If the tale be true Piero owed life and liberty to his son's presence of mind.*

Piero's enemies had made a false move in threatening the integrity of Florentine territory. Immediately on his arrival in Florence Piero took Bentivoglio's letter to the Signoria, while armed peasants were brought into the town to protect his person. The Signoria, which was favourable to the Mountain, might have winked at a *coup d'état*, but was now forced, on Piero's formal intelligence, to despatch a commissioner to enquire into the number and objects of the Ferrarese troops, and to prevent advance across the frontier. It then, with the characteristic weakness of the Florentine executive, attempted arbitration. It is the duty of a government, when the public peace is threatened, not to mediate but to command. It should prevent parties from breaking the law by public force, and not persuade them to keep it by a private understanding. If either side rejects or disregards the arbitration of the government, the latter becomes in a measure a

* M. Perrens rejects the story of this conspiracy, on the ground that it is first mentioned in the flattering biography of Lorenzo by Valori, when a Medici legend was already taking shape. The conspiracy, however, is mentioned by Landucci, a contemporary, by Guicciardini who had the best oral testimony, and Ammirato who had documentary evidence at command. The latter states that the tale of Lorenzo's prudence rested on the most reliable authority. Francesco Neroni confessed to some such plot. The archbishop, who is not elsewhere mentioned as an active member of the opposition, thought it wise to flee from Florence, while it is possible that a complimentary letter written by Ferrante to Lorenzo referred to his conduct on this occasion. On the other hand the road by the Badia and Porta Faenza was not the straightest nor the easiest from Careggi.

party to the quarrel, it loses the consciousness of independence and impartiality. But independence in the Florentine executive had long been impossible. Divided as the city was, the power of the State must lurch from one side or another according to the chances of the drawing for the offices. Technically its strength was uncontrolled, but it was strong only in favour of the dominant party, it had no force to master it. The frequent change of the executive did but prolong the possibilities of party bloodshed.

The night that followed these events was an anxious one for Florence, The Signoria intent upon its own safety increased its guard and barricaded itself within the Palace. The Medici quarter was swarming with armed peasants, while on the opposite side of the river Niccolò Soderini led two hundred of the poorer townsfolk of San Frediano to Pitti's palace. Here, however, the weakness and division of the Mountain became apparent. Niccolò was for violent measures, he would occupy the *Palazzo* by armed force, and utilise the fresh strength of the Signoria, while five out of nine, including the Gonfalonier, were devoted to his party. Others suggested that they should burn the palaces of the leaders of the Plain. Neroni, however, reflected that his house would be in dangerous proximity to the flames; the older men feared a repetition of the rising of the Ciompi, for fire and plunder are contagious maladies. Agnolo Acciaiuoli had not apparently been aware of the more extreme schemes of his party; he shrank from measures which passed the bounds of law. Luca Pitti failed in the face of

danger. His character was impetuous rather than resolute; his apparent audacity was the fruit of imagination rather than of the will; he conceived the ends before he realised the means. Such a nature when it stumbles upon a check believes it to be a scruple. Niccolò upbraided the wavering leader, he would be the ruin of both, of himself because he had followed Pitti's schemes too far, of Pitti because he had made his counsel of small account.

There was difference of opinion also in the palace of the Via Larga, but Piero's will was here supreme. The younger spirits wished to cross the river and fall upon their opponents, before the Signoria could take action against the Medici. It was afterwards admitted that an attack would have succeeded, but apart from Piero's physical dislike of violence, the Medici always preferred a victory under the letter of the law. On August 28th the new Signoria, which entered office on September 1st, would be chosen, and the Gonfalonier must be drawn from the quarter of Santa Croce, the east end of Florence where the labouring classes were devoted to the Medici. In the meantime the Milanese troops had arrived within easy reach, and the Medicean influence in the subject territory served the party in good stead. From Volterra alone, four hundred men marched into the city. It is said, moreover, that Piero's adherents found their way to the box from which the new Signoria would be drawn, and, by methods not unknown to latter days, secured a favourable return.

The expiring Signoria realised that a compromise

would now be advantageous to its friends and redound to its own credit. In concert therefore with their successors, the Priors invited the leaders of the hostile parties to a meeting. Piero was too ill to attend, but sent Lorenzo and his brother as his representatives. The enemies swore solemnly to lay down arms, and sealed their promise with embraces. Piero then received his chief opponents in his bedroom. Pitti had already been half won by the prospect of a matrimonial alliance with the Medici. After the formal reconciliation with the other members of his party, Pitti remained alone with Piero and his sons; he left the chamber with tears in his eyes. Piero's affectionate and dignified address had moved the old intriguer in whose vanity there was a touch of sentiment. Once more Soderini's warnings and reproaches stirred him to action, and he summoned to arms his friends from within and without the city. Once more the veteran was over-persuaded by the young Lorenzo. The last day of the outgoing Signoria was full of excitement. News arrived that horse and foot had been seen in the mountains of Pistoia. Piero armed his supporters who had been concealed in houses and convents, and made them guard his house and the adjoining *piazza;* "a manifest sign of tyranny" wrote the republican Rinuccini. When the Priors' officers went to close the Porta San Gallo, Francesco della Stufa, who held the gate for Piero, took away their keys and told them to go home, at the due hour he would give the keys to Piero who would himself hand them to the Signoria.

On September 1st the Medici were safe. The new Gonfalonier was Ruberto Lioni, a man of good sense and liberal opinions, but from personal ambition devoted to the Medici, and, indeed, for an opponent of the house, who lived in the Santa Croce quarter, life would have been made unpleasant. The younger bloods of the now prevailing faction were exultant, they urged the destruction of their foes; there could be no peace, they cried, while Soderini lived. But Piero was an "old Parliamentary hand;" proscription must be by precedent. On September 2nd, the great bell of the Palace tolled the people to a Parlamento; they were summoned to attend unarmed. In addition to the ordinary guard, the citizens found the *piazza* surrounded by the armed bands of the Medici. Though Luca Pitti and Diotisalvi Neroni were present there was no opposition to the proposals of the government. A Balìa with extraordinary powers for four months was demanded and carried by acclamation. It consisted of the sitting Signoria, the Colleges, all those who had been qualified for the office of gonfalonier since 1434, and about one hundred additional citizens. After the assembly had dissolved a strong guard was posted in the *piazza*; of the two officers in command, one was a creature, the other a nephew, of Piero. On September 5th the Balìa decided by 199 votes to 77 that extraordinary authority should be given to either the Podestà or the Capitano for five years, and to the Eight for ten years, and that for the latter period appointment by lot should cease. The control of the executive was thus secured to the Medici for a decade.

The fate of the vanquished was now sealed. A certain Messer Luca writing on the 6th, though he believed that Piero would behave with moderation, confessed that he was perspiring as he wrote, though it was early on a fresh September morning, for he and his party were at Piero's mercy. A few days later the sentences were published. Niccolò Soderini and his son, who had already fled, were exiled to Provence, Agnolo Acciaiuoli to Barletta. He too had fled, and in this he was premature. Had he personally thrown himself upon the mercy of Piero, he might probably have found pardon. Piero had much regard for him: he had been far less guilty than the other chiefs of the party; he had been more honest and dignified in opposition, he had not visited Piero at his bedside, and kissed him on the ips, with treachery in his heart; his sufferings for he Medici in early life deserved consideration. A ittle later he realised his mistake, and wrote a letter alf humble and half resentful begging Piero to ntercede for his recall. It was too late; Piero, with ome expressions of personal affection and some re-roaches, replied that his punishment was a matter or the government, and not for a private person. The Medici could in fact punish more easily than hey could pardon. Fate fell heaviest upon the Ne-oni. They as a family had been most deeply in-olved in the conflict. The archbishop had escaped o Rome; the other leading members were exiled lmost to a man. The Neroni never again held up heir heads. There was one great family the less or the Medici to fear. The Soderini and the

Acciaiuoli suffered only in the persons of individual members, for Tommaso Soderini had remained loyal to the Medici, and Agnolo Acciaiuoli's son Jacopo, had warned his father against his ill-considered movements; the father too late confessed to his son that he had been six times a fool. Luca Pitti remained alone officially unpunished, but it is the commonplace of Florentine historians of all ages that his punishment was the most enduring and the least endurable. All Florence turned its back upon the vain old man whose meat and drink had ever been popular applause. The very workmen refused to work upon his house, to finish which he had betrayed his comrades. The Medici disowned the alliance between Lorenzo and his daughter; the girl was forced to be content with the Roman bank-manager, Giovanni Tornabuoni, Lorenzo's uncle. Florentines who sought Pitti's favour had contributed to the building, or to the furnishing of his palace. These gifts were now demanded back on the pretext that they were loans. In political life, conceit and vanity are valuable qualities in youth and middle age; they give an impetus to which undue importance is attached; in after years the apparent virtues become obvious vices, and entail a punishment greater than they deserve; extravagant worshippers avenge their superstition on their whilom idols. The Pitti, as the Neroni, were henceforth harmless. To modify the impression of such harshness as had been displayed, some of the older exiled families were recalled. Prominent among these were the Strozzi. Filippo who had lived at Naples had won for him-

self the friendship of the King, and had been on easy terms with the leaders of both Florentine parties: he had been tortured with doubt as to which it would serve his purpose best to propitiate, but he had chosen aright. He hastened back to his home to the infinite joy of his admirable mother, begging that he might find something more than sausages to greet his home-coming. If the gain was his, the loss was ours, for from henceforth the letters of Alessandra Strozzi almost cease. The Strozzi in later years were destined to be the last great enemies and victims of the house of Medici. Filippo, however, prudently took little part in politics. His wealth and leisure were employed till death in building the glorious palace in which his family still lives. Lorenzo, say his enemies, was the Mephistopheles who lured Filippo to that most ruinous of mistresses, the art of building.

The triumph of the Medici at home was soon disturbed by danger from abroad. Diotisalvi Neroni found his way to Venice. Here he was known to be constantly interviewed by the Senate, while he held close communication with the condottiere Colleone in his home at Malpaga. In this castle, which exists almost intact to the present day as an admirable example of the half military, half domestic architecture of the century, lived the old general near to his native town of Bergamo. His wealth was enormous, his establishment that of a prince, he was esteemed the first soldier in Italy since the murder of Piccinino. Yet he fretted from want of employment and from disappointed ambition, for after all his service

he was but a hireling soldier, and had won no territory. Now he might carve for himself a state at the expense of Florence or of Milan, he might even hurl Galeazzo Maria from the Ducal throne; was not Francesco Sforza a mere condottiere like himself? The Pope, indeed, had formally renewed the general Italian peace, in which Venice had concurred. The Republic, however, was not indisposed to fish in troubled waters. Colleone was given to understand that he might enter the service of the exiles. He would thus maintain a force, which might be at the disposal of Venice whenever it was required, and which meantime would inflict loss, perhaps ruin, on her rivals. The Visconti in time of peace had similarly turned their condottieri with their hungry troops of horse to graze upon their nominal allies. Colleone brought to the exiles the professional mainland force of Venice, and there is little doubt that he was subsidised by his late employers. Another serviceable ally to the exiles, who were now gathered at Venice, was Borso d'Este, who allowed his brother Ercole to take 1400 Ferrarese horse to their aid. On the other hand the Neapolitan troops moved slowly up through Italy under Alfonso, while Galeazzo Maria prepared to join them in Romagna. The Florentine forces were placed under Ruberto San Severino, a great Neapolitan noble, high in favour at the Milanese Court; to the Count of Urbino was given the command in chief of the forces of the league. The war was fought entirely for the position of the Medici, and yet its scene was far from Florence, nor did any member of the house take any

personal share. While Milan was represented by its Duke, and Naples by its heir, Lorenzo de' Medici never appeared on the field of action. He had no military training, no military tastes, but a more decisive reason for his absence was his father's health. Piero was, to repeat his own phrase, a man without hands apart from his son, and were he to die during Lorenzo's absence, the succession would be more than doubtful.

The war and its preparations curiously illustrate the military condition of the Italian states. The Duke of Milan had not the money to pay his men, while the Florentines had not the men to pay. They therefore borrowed 2000 of Galeazzo Maria's horse. The Aragonese dynasty at Naples was eminently military; Ferrante and his son gave unwearied attention to the army. They did not depend, as other states, on the hiring of condottieri for the period of war, but maintained a trained standing army on modern principles. Yet Ferrante was warned that his cavalry would run away, and after the event his incredulity was converted into disgust. They plundered their allies' territory upon the march, but showed little zest to meet the enemy. For the petty military princes of Romagna the war was a godsend. The harrying of their peasants implied little loss to them, for they made more by selling their swords than by the taxes which they levied. Their principle was that stated by Paul II. to Borso d'Este, that in time of war the smaller powers have the chance of making elbow-room.

Colleone's plan of campaign was to strike the

great high-road running from Piacenza to Ancona through a very fertile territory lying beneath the eastern slopes of the Apennines. Following this to Faenza he intended to take the shortest route to Florence, which ascends the Val di Lamone and crosses a practicable pass into the district of the Mugello. Thus it was that the defection of Astorre Manfredi, Lord of Faenza, who should have defended the Val di Lamone, seemed of supreme importance, for Faenza, if we conceive of the mountain pass as a bridge, was the *tête du pont*. But Colleone was baffled by the fact that Bologna lying close under the Apennines and astride of the high-road gave his enemies a strong position and ample supplies. From hence, though not actually stopping his advance, they could threaten his flank and rear. Colleone had crossed the Po with 8000 horse, and 6000 foot, a reversal of proportion which was almost invariable in Italian armies. The League gradually mustered a force equal if not superior, but it suffered from divided command, and particularly from the cowardice or incompetence of the Duke of Milan. Both Colleone and Federigo of Urbino were old, both had been trained in a school which believed in the merits of sitting still until movement became compulsory. It was the interest of the condottieri to prolong the war. It was essential to a state such as Florence, whose governmental resources were really extraordinarily small, to force an action. The interests of employers and employed were absolutely distinct. Florence was in a critical condition, the increased burden of taxation was naturally laid to

the door of the Medici; every day some shop was shut; if the war continued it was believed that there must be a general emigration.

Hearing that the Duke of Milan was the main obstacle to successful action the Ten of War invited him to a conference at Florence, and in his absence the one battle of the war was fought. After marching and countermarching Colleone had reached Imola whence he could strike across the Apennines to Florence, or move on Faenza only a few miles distant. The Count of Urbino decided to attack, and a skirmish between cavalry outposts at la Molinella led to a general engagement. The battle was celebrated in its own age by the comparative greatness of the loss, with Machiavelli by the fiction that only one man was killed, and he smothered. Colleone was ultimately driven from the field. The total loss amounted to some 300 horses and 200 men. The war still dragged on for six months more, for Galeazzo Maria withdrew his troops to protect his own territory. The Venetians had encouraged the Duke of Savoy, the permanent rival of the Duke of Milan, to create a diversion on the west, while the exiled faction of the Fieschi was urging Genoa and the Riviera to throw off the Milanese yoke. The decisive moment was the intervention of Louis XI. in favour of the Medici. He threatened the Venetians in no ambiguous terms, at a moment when Colleone had beaten the allies at Dovadola in Florentine Romagna and when the Neroni were stirring up disaffection in the Mugello which would have rendered invasion from this quarter dangerous. Borso

d'Este undertook to mediate, but Paul II., his suzerain, deprived him of so profitable a position. Colleone insisted upon a command in chief of the Italian league against the Turk, and enormous compensation for his expenses in the war. The King of Naples and the Duke of Milan properly resisted this extortion; it would be a dangerous precedent that the settled powers should allow themselves to be blackmailed by an unscrupulous adventurer. The Pope was forced to abandon Colleone, as he had previously abandoned the Florentine exiles. For the Medici the war had been rather satisfactory than glorious.* They had survived a period of great distress without any manifest expression of disaffection. The exiles were in an infinitely worse position than when war had broken out. They had now no recourse but in private charity. They were no longer merely ostracised for a period. They had broken bounds; a price had been put on their heads; their property was confiscated. Agnolo Acciaiuoli devoted himself to securing in a better world the success which he had missed in this; Diotisalvi Neroni dragged out an uneventful existence to extreme old age. Even in their own families the exiles had met with scant sympathy. Tommaso Soderini and Donato Acciaiuoli had by their diplomatic activity honourably justified the confidence which Piero had generously placed in them.

Lorenzo had not, indeed, learnt the art of war in a radically rotten school, but had many opportunities for studying the methods of Italian diplomacy, and for making personal acquaintance with Italian

princes. He had noted the dislike of the Florentine populace for Galeazzo Maria who had ridden into Florence with an empty purse upon his sleeve, which the wealthy unwarlike city must needs fill. The Duchess of Calabria, who had taken up her residence in Florence, improved the Platonic friendship with Lorenzo which had originated on her bridal journey. Alfonso himself had condescended to make the city his winter quarters at Florentine expense. The war had not directly resulted in any accession of territory, for the Florentines had acted on the defensive. The sums raised, however, by the government enabled it to buy in 1468 the town of Sarzana, and the adjoining castle of Sarzanella from Ludovico di Campo Fregoso. This acquisition played no unimportant part in the life of Lorenzo, and in the fortunes of his family.

The storm of war, laid in the spring of 1468, burst forth again in the autumnal equinox, and once more Romagna was the centre of disturbance, though Florence lay within the area affected. In October died Sigismondo Malatesta the most characteristic political figure of the fifteenth-century Renaissance, a pagan by profession, yet dying as captain of the guard at the Vatican, a savage in sensuality, yet a refined patron of art and letters. He had, naturally enough, no legitimate issue, and the Papacy claimed Rimini as a lapsed fief. The bastard Ruberto was too quick for the ecclesiastical troops; he seized the lordship, and defied the Pope. The Triple Alliance, jealous of the extension of Papal influence in Romagna, took up Malatesta's cause, and this too was

upheld by Federigo of Urbino, with the prescience of the fate which a century and a half later was to befall his own posterity. The Pope's general, Alessandro Sforza, besieged Rimini, but in August, 1469, received a crushing defeat. Venetian aid seemed more likely to endanger than to serve the Papal pretensions in Romagna. Malatesta was prepared to summon the Turks to the Romagnol shores. The Ottomans had made good their footing on the Albanian coast, a few hours of favourable breeze and Italy might share the servitude of Greece. Paul II. was no obstinate visionary; he accepted the inevitable and peace was made. Thus once more the alliance of which the Medici were the binding element had successfully enforced Italian peace.

Apart from this distant war the interest of the last eighteen months of Piero's life consists in the amusements, the arts, and the entanglements of peace. Foremost among these are Lorenzo's tournament, his marriage, and his second visit to the Court of Milan. Piero, in wretched health, seldom appeared before the public. The ostensible representatives of the dynasty were Lorenzo and his brother. This was a heyday for the brilliant youth of Florence, and for the populace, whose artistic sense and material love of pleasure revelled in spectacular novelties. Even at this early time Machiavelli attributes to Lorenzo the deliberate design of corrupting the State by pandering to its senses. But Machiavelli's error lies in this,—that all his capital friends and foes must be Machiavellians undiluted. Machiavellism has seldom been the sole constituent of character in that

or any age. In every nation which loves amusement, political influence is the consequence of the national forms of sport. England and America know this well. Hunting and racing have won many a seat. For the intelligent democracy of the North skill at football is no mean recommendation of a candidate. Bruising and trotting have found their representatives in Congress.

Lorenzo had the keenest sense for animal enjoyment tempered by good taste, and in this he was the type of his city and his age. He doubtless knew that the amusements with which he regaled the people would redound to his political advantage, but they were a necessary result of his physique. Like most thoughtful youths, Lorenzo had formed a subjective theory of love, and must needs apply it to an object. In a far less desirable position such a search is not usually prolonged. At a tournament given in 1467 Lorenzo had singled out Lucrezia Donati. The lady gave him a wreath of violets, and in return Lorenzo promised her a yet more splendid tourney. His love was mainly theoretical, in no way passing the limits of propriety; Lucrezia was his Laura and his Beatrice. An elder Donati had been Dante's wedded wife. Lucrezia avenged the discomfort which the poet's intellectual amour may well have caused to the distant scion of her house. Lorenzo's tournament was held professedly in honour of his coming marriage. Yet it was the name not of Clarice Orsini, but of Lucrezia Donati that was on every spectator's lips, and doubtless in Lorenzo's heart.

The lists were erected in the playground of Flor-

ence, the great oblong *piazza* of Santa Croce. The reports of the tournament differ characteristically from those of northern chroniclers. We read, not of hard knocks, splintered lances, and falling knights, but of spectacular details appropriate to the Lyceum and Drury Lane. Writers dwell on Lorenzo's trumpeters and drums and fifes, of the ten young men on horseback, and sixty-four on foot, who, clad in full armour, formed the rear of the procession. We know the value of the diamond upon his shield, of the pearl surrounded by rubies and diamonds in which the feather of his cap was set. In so theatrical a scene changes of costume were a leading feature. Lorenzo rode into the square in a surcoat with a cape of red and white silk, and a scarf embroidered with fading and blooming roses, and the motto, "Le temps revient" in precious pearls. For the combat he donned another surcoat of velvet fringed with gold, with the golden lilies of France upon an azure ground, while a helmet with three blue feathers replaced the jewelled cap. His very horse was draped with pearl-embroidered velvet, red and white. Lorenzo was a good horseman, but it was not perhaps his skill or courage that won the prize. His success is rightly estimated in his own short memoir, "To follow the custom, and do like others, I gave a tournament on the Piazza Santa Croce at great cost, and with much magnificence; I find that about 10,000 ducats were spent on it. Although I was not a very vigorous warrior, nor a hard hitter, the first prize was adjudged to me, a helmet inlaid with silver and a figure of Mars as the crest." Lorenzo was

A FLORENTINE WEDDING.

Scene in the story of Nastagio degli Onesti, painted by Sandro Botticelli for the wedding of Giovanni Bini and Lucrezia Pucci in 1487. Their scutcheons and that of the Medici are represented. In the collection of G. Donaldson, Esq.

(*From a photograph by Dixon.*)

not vain ; he reckoned the cost of his entertainment, and did not deceive himself as to its result. He received the prize because he was in fact a prince whom it was prudent to propitiate, and this it was that pleased him.

In the following May, Clarice Orsini, Lorenzo's wife, was brought to Florence. The bridegroom had shown no great inclination to visit Rome to fetch his bride. His own notice is curiously cold: "I, Lorenzo, took for wife Clarice, daughter of the lord Jacopo, or rather she was given to me." It is generally believed that this expression was merely formal, for the *mariage de convenance* was in Italy, then as now, a matter of course. Yet, where poetry and sentiment were concerned, Lorenzo struck out of the beaten track. His fervid expressions that love could be for one woman only, and that for life, may have been the genuine reflex of his feeling. This was essentially a marriage of state. Piero was not content to wed his son to a Florentine citizen of his own rank ; he must choose a lady from a foreign noble house. The foreign alliance was ill-liked ; it was yet another proof that the Medici were rising above the ranks of the oligarchy. The Orsini were ever popular, Orsini manners became in after-times a by-word, and the connection helped to bring ruin upon Lorenzo's son. Yet Piero's new departure had its reasons. If the Medici power at home depended upon influence abroad, they must place themselves on a level with other princes, and intermarriage was the natural instrument of alliance. This was the first experiment in that system of which the marriages of

Giuliano, Duke of Nemours, Lorenzo, Duke of Florence, Catherine and Mary de' Medici were the full development.

The Orsini were a family of Teutonic origin but now among the greatest of Italy. Their possessions spread from the sea to the Apennines on the north of Rome and then turned southwards until they touched the estates of their hereditary enemies the Colonna, in the mountains eastward of the capital. The house was a nursery of condottieri and of cardinals, for it was prolific, and younger sons must make their way by sword or mass book. In Naples also they held high office and large fiefs. Clarice's uncle Latino was among the most influential cardinals in the Curia; her father owned a half share of the estates of Monte Rotondo to the northeast of Rome, her mother belonged to the more powerful line of Bracciano, being sister of the Cardinal, and of the magnificent head of the house, Napoleone.

The connection had many advantages. This soldier family might compensate the Medici for their weakness in the field, would form an additional link to the house of Naples, and give them influence at the Papal Court. The Orsini, moreover, owned a chain of fortresses across the high-road from Florence to the south, sufficiently near to aid in suppressing domestic disaffection, or to reinforce the Medici against foreign enterprise, while they were traditional enemies of the rival republic of Siena. Other reasons made a foreign marriage desirable. Jealousy was the prevailing feature of the leading Florentine families. Had Lorenzo's marriage propi-

tiated one it would have offended a score of others. His hand had been half promised to Luca Pitti's daughter; an alliance with another Florentine house might have driven the Pitti into open opposition or more dangerous conspiracy.

Clarice was above the middle height, with fair skin and a tinge of red in her abundant hair; her face was too round for beauty, but her neck was delicate and her figure shapely; the hands were long and pretty. She did not carry her head as bravely as did the Florentine girls, but bent it forward. This was ascribed to a natural diffidence, no inconvenient virtue for a bridegroom's family. Once or twice Lorenzo had seen his future wife and expressed no dissatisfaction at the choice. His mother had been to Rome and had anxiously enquired into the young girl's qualifications, convincing herself that at Rome there was no lady worth marrying who had more beauty. Political considerations no doubt prevailed, but there was no lack of loving caution, the Medici had not entirely lost their *bourgeois* domesticity. Lorenzo might well have preferred a brilliant, highly cultured Florentine girl, such as was Lucrezia Donati, or Lucrezia Gondi. Clarice was not highly educated. Monte Rotondo had been, indeed, in the previous century a local centre of Renaissance culture, but the girl's appreciation of art and literature, inborn in the daughters of a good Florentine house, can only have been acquired at haphazard during visits to the Cardinal Latino, who had children of his own to educate. An early letter from Clarice to Lorenzo is not one of the epistolary gems of the Renaissance. "I have

received your letter which has given me great pleasure, and in which you tell me of the tournament where you won the prize. I am glad that you are successful in what gives you pleasure, and that my prayer is heard, for I have no other wish than to see you happy. Give my regards to my father Piero and my mother Lucrezia and all who are near to you. At the same time I send my regards to you. I have nothing else to say. Yours Clarice de Ursinis." The union was not unhappy, but it is noticeable that the one serious difference was on the subject of education.

On Sunday June 4th and the following days the marriage feast was celebrated. In the Via Larga a ballroom was extemporised and here Lorenzo received his bride. Her dress was of white and gold brocade, her horse a gift from the royal Neapolitan stables. Trumpeters and fifers, girls and matrons, noble Florentines and their servants bore her company. The train was a consummate example of those wedding processions which may still be seen painted or moulded upon many a dowry chest, or in Botticelli's pictures. Age and youth, gentlemen and ladies, were at the table separated. In the broad balcony overlooking the garden dined Clarice with fifty of the younger matrons, while Lucrezia entertained the older ladies within the house. Under the arches round the square courtyard sat seventy of the greater and graver citizens, while the younger men made merry in the hall. The forty stewards were all of gentle birth. The David of Donatello in the courtyard, and the graceful fountain in the garden formed

centres for a ring of tables, on which stood wine in huge brazen coolers. Each day some thousand guests were entertained at the Via Larga or in the house of Lorenzo's half uncle, Carlo de' Medici. Yet in accordance with Florentine practice there was no undue extravagance in meat and drink. An obscure modern banker with no object of art within his house, would consider the guests at his daughter's wedding ill entertained on roast and boiled meat, jellies, cakes, and sweetmeats, with Malvoisie and red Italian wines. In the less material departments, however, Lorenzo prided himself on novelty. To amuse the people troops of horsemen charged each other in mimic warfare, while a mock fort was assailed and stoutly held. The impromptu ball-room was hung with cloth adorned with the Medici and Orsini arms, and with the unequalled oriental carpets which in contemporary paintings excite the envy of the modern householder. Here Lorenzo was at his best. His ingenuity was lavished on the dances and music, and some of the songs to which the dancers tripped were, not improbably, his own.

The marriage ceremonies over, Lorenzo set forth for Milan with his sisters' husbands and Gentile Becchi. The Duke was nearly a year his senior in point of marriage, and chose him for the sponsor for the luckless heir whom Bona of Savoy had just brought into a very troubled world. At Prato and Pistoia, Lorenzo was received as though he were prince of Tuscany. In independent, jealous Lucca, it was an offence that he should lodge outside the city at "The Crown." He must defer departure to

attend a public mass, and to make a speech, which won all hearts, to a crowded meeting in the hall of the Signoria. Loaded with presents, with wine and comfits, and that favourite dainty, the seeds of the stone pine, he must in return unpack his plate and ask the leading citizens to dinner. Though he forestalled the appointed hour he could not depart unnoticed, and crowds escorted him on his way. No wonder that the Medici watched Lucca as the pear that was ripe for falling, though the little oligarchy proved a stubborn cone that would not yield its seed till the French Revolution with violence cracked it. Hence Lorenzo followed the road along the southern Riviera, enjoying the seaward views, which, as his poems testify, he could so well appreciate. At Pietra Santa again he was dragged from the "Bell without the Walls" by one of the Fieschi who governed the town for the great Genoese commercial company of St. George. The people could not stare at him enough, while the aristocracy gave him supper in an arbour whence he looked over the sea and a little fruitful plain backed by olive groves and vineyards. No wonder again that Pietra Santa was in Lorenzo's day to fall to Florence. After such hospitality a beautiful ride of sixteen miles was cheerily performed. With every inclination to be pleased, Lorenzo entered Sarzana, his father's latest acquisition. The geographical importance of this town was out of all proportion to its size. It commanded the usual route from Milan to Florence. There was little or no landward communication parallel to the sea-coast south of Genoa. Travellers

left the Æmilian road at Parma, and passing the mountains descended by Pontremoli, the *Pons Tremulus* of the Romans, to Sarzana, whence the road led through a narrow plain between sea and mountains. Thus the possession of Sarzana could check invasion from the north, whilst it seemed to leave Lucca at the mercy of her Florentine neighbours. Hard by, moreover, stood the fine fortress of Sarzanella upon a commanding hill, built by the great Ghibelline soldier Castruccio Castrocani. The strength of this castle excited Lorenzo's admiration, as do its ruins that of the traveller of to-day.

From Sarzana, Lorenzo journeyed by Pontremoli to Milan. Here he held the baby Giovanni Galeazzo at the font. He was a welcome godfather.[6] "We gave," he wrote, "to the Duchess a gold necklace with a large diamond, worth about 3000 ducats. The result was that the Duke wished me to stand for all his future sons." Gentile Becchi had promised to write weekly to Clarice, and it is from a letter of his that the details of the journey are known. But Lorenzo himself did not fail to write from Milan. "I have arrived here safely and am quite well. This I believe, will please you better than any other news, if I may judge by my own longings for you and home. Be good company to Piero, Mona Contessina, and Mona Lucrezia, and I will soon come back to you, for it seems a thousand years till I can see you once again. Pray to God for me, and if there is anything here you want, let me know before I leave. Your own Lorenzo de' Medici. Milan, July 22, 1469."

[6] 6

During this visit Lorenzo possibly somewhat lost his head, and committed his father more deeply than he liked. Piero was content that his son should take the lead at home, but he kept the wires of foreign politics under his own control. He begged his wife to warn her son not to exceed the instructions of his mission, and not to play the prince; he would not suffer that "the goslings should lead the geese to drink."

This journey, in itself without importance, throws light upon Lorenzo's character, and upon his future methods. Throughout, while modestly affecting a private character, he threw the ostentation of public reception upon others. He did not make every halting-place the occasion for a speech, but when compelled he spoke right well. He used his eyes to good purpose. It was doubtless from the observations of this journey, that he resolved to win Pietra Santa, and to hold Sarzana at all costs. He did not, as the spies of Israel, bear back the giant clusters on his shoulders, but he knew where he could find them. Young as he was, the blending of expansion and reserve was even now his peculiar charm.

On December 2, 1469, Piero died. He was but fifty-three, but rheumatic gout had made him an old man. Display had always been distasteful to the most retiring of the Medici. Piero begged that he might be quietly buried, and the monument which Lorenzo and Giuliano erected to their father and his brother Giovanni was in harmony with the simple funeral. This the visitor will not find in the frigid new sacristy of San Lorenzo, among the marble mo-

THE TOMB OF PIERO AND GIOVANNI DE' MEDICI.

In the old sacristy of San Lorenzo. Designed by Andrea Verrocchio for Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

saics, the sprawling allegorical women, the pretentious dramatic figures of less important Medici. He must enter the old sacristy from the church, and immediately on his left will see a lofty niche. Herein is an urn of red porphyry, and on its front a dark green marble plaque, above it cornucopiæ of bronze, while great acanthus leaves luxuriate round the angles of its sides. To the two side walls and to the floor the urn is fastened by ropes of bronze, and the metal cordage runs behind the tomb to the ceiling of the niche. It is very plain; a bank manager of the Medici would have despised it. Yet it is Verrocchio's work and Lorenzo's taste.

Pitti.

Albizzi.

Galeazzo Maria Sforza, and reverse.

CHAPTER III.

Lorenzo and Giuliano at the head of the State—Constitutional and financial experiments—Social pre-eminence of the Medici—Lorenzo's Italian contemporaries—Rebellion of Volterra.

1469–1472.

IT was far from improbable that on the death of Piero the power of the Medici would crumble away. Their position in Florence did not seem assured. The strength of a family clique, such as was theirs, depends not only upon the removal of dangerous rivals, but upon the acquisition of fresh allies, on a constant system of recruiting, to fill up the gaps caused by death and desertion, upon hopes held out to the ambitious that they might share the loaves and fishes of the governmental party. In his suppression of the Neroni movement Piero had shown much judgment; he was, as many languid and indolent men, serviceable at a crisis, but he took no pains with the daily drudgery of keeping his party together and of adding to its numbers. On the other hand he had paid unfailing attention to foreign poli-

tics, and was in higher favour at foreign Courts than he was within his city. His judgment was held in high esteem at Naples and at Milan. It was upon Piero that Louis XI. conferred the distinction of stamping the French lilies upon one of the Medicean balls.

Lorenzo and his brother could count upon support from abroad, if only they could tide over the first dangerous moments at home. Their immediate success was chiefly due to the prompt action of Tommaso Soderini. Piero had relied upon his tried fidelity, which had stood the test of his brother's desertion, to ensure a peaceful succession for his sons. So great was Soderini's influence that it was believed that he could have obtained the supreme position in the State for his own family. He flattered himself, perhaps, that Lorenzo would be guided by his leading-strings, that under the prestige of the name of Medici his own effectual power would be the more secure. To the convent of Sant' Antonio, Soderini summoned some six hundred of the leading citizens. He pointed out the high promise of the two young brothers, their sound good-sense, and intellectual attainments, their evident wish to win the affection and esteem of their fellow-citizens; Cosimo and Piero had been the preservers of the Commonwealth, bearing the burden of its government day by day, showing courage or ripe judgment as occasion demanded; gratitude to them should induce the citizens to grant to the two youths the position which their father and grandfather had held. Luca Pitti's representatives, his son and his son-in-

law, supported Soderini, the former arguing that there must be one lord superior to other citizens, to ensure unanimity and consistency in the administration of affairs of State.

It would be unwise to assume that there was no lurking hostility to the continuance of the Medici rule, but nothing but willing assent was publicly expressed, and Soderini and his friends could on the following day present to Lorenzo and his brother the unanimous petition of the citizens that they should assume the place vacated by their father. What this place was it would have been difficult to define in words. It entailed no official position, no state magistracy, the command of not a soldier, nor a policeman. No single citizen was subjected to their orders. Ostensibly they were wealthy bankers and no more. The constitutional executive could ruin them with taxation at its arbitrary will, it could trump up charges, and send them into exile, or to the Bargello for execution; it could summon them to the Palace, and throw them with scant form of trial from the upper windows on the pavement, and many of the citizens would have cried "Well done!" Yet everyone knew that the nameless position thus offered was that of princes, that the Medici were gradually taking their place among the *signori naturali*, the born-lords of Italy, that the citizen's fortunes, his home and life, were at their mercy, for the electoral boxes were filled with the names of their creatures, while the assessment rolls and the courts of law would be unscrupulously used to favour or to ruin.

The position however was as dangerous as it was tempting, and its acceptance by a youth of twenty who had an intimate knowledge of its dangers, required some nerve. The short note in which Lorenzo gives his reasons for his acceptance is therefore of high interest, the more so as it is contained in no formal memoir, but is a brief dry record of the more important incidents of his life, such as many, or most, Florentine gentry jotted down in their diaries: "Piero our father was much bewailed by all the town, for he was a man of honour and of the most perfect kindliness. From the princes of Italy and particularly from those of more importance, we received letters and embassies of condolence on his death, and they offered their whole political influence for our support. The second day after his death, although I, Lorenzo, was very young, in fact only in my twenty-first year, the leading men of the city and of the ruling party came to our house to express their sorrow for our misfortune, and to persuade me to take upon myself the charge of the government of the city, as my grandfather and father had already done. This proposal being contrary to the instincts of my age, and entailing great labour and danger, I accepted against my will, and only for the sake of protecting my friends, and our own fortunes, for in Florence one can ill live in the possession of wealth without control of the government." This last sentence has often been regarded as a merely formal or hypocritical expression, but this view implies a misconception of the many sides of Lorenzo's character. Cleverly as, on the whole,

he conducted it, it can scarcely be doubted that the drudgery of the government wire-pulling was often an intolerable burden. He loved the country better than the town, he delighted in intimate society, in his family circle, in the converse of artists and men of letters. He had all those tastes for which leisure is essential, he was by education and nature an artistic and literary critic, and possessed original creative powers. He was interested in pretty women, and his new position was one which, if it added opportunities, likewise entailed an inconvenient caution. The Lucrezia Donati of his poems may have been a literary lay figure. Ladies of experience had, however, told their sons that to employ Lorenzo's influence with his father they must win the favour of the fascinating bride of Niccolò Ardinghelli who was no sooner married than he was sent on a mission to the Levant. Many of these pleasures Lorenzo must in some degree surrender, and yet if he did not accept the proffered position, he lost them all, for they all depended upon wealth, and wealth at Florence would not bloom on the shady side of the Palazzo Pubblico. Having once belonged to the dominant faction, he must be at its head or nowhere; if he were not in the swim he sank, he was too hereditarily powerful to play the *dilettante* in obscurity.

As a result of the unofficial powers conferred by the leaders of his party upon Lorenzo, the Signoria, which sat in the Palazzo, became in all important matters of state but the mouthpiece of the family conclave in the Via Larga. Soderini and his friends deliberately had all confidential business referred to

Lorenzo, in order to make his supremacy the more manifest. Many indeed believed that, after a few days, the Signoria would resume its constitutional position, but the present Priors were in the Medicean interest, the names of those who would replace them were drawn, not by lot, but by hand, and thus Lorenzo would have, at all events, three months in which to consolidate his power. Time was everything, for as a keen-sighted ambassador reported to his master, "Well begun is half done." Did Lorenzo remember this when, in a drama written in later life, he makes his hero say: "A ruler must establish his authority in his first few days"? The chief danger for the Medici lay, not in a return to constitutional practices, but in the fear lest the oligarchical element among his own friends should develop at the expense of his personal authority; the period of a boy's rule is ever a golden hour for the pretensions of a Council, whether formal or informal. Lorenzo however, like many who die soon, began to live early.

The period of Lorenzo's power may be divided into two almost exactly equal halves. Of these the first closes with the Pazzi conspiracy, and the disastrous war which followed. These two great central events in Lorenzo's life were the results of mistakes or experiments in domestic as well as in foreign policy, while the second period comprises the correction of these mistakes, and the evolution of regular principles in diplomacy and administration. The experiments of the early period were usually short-lived, they left little or no permanent trace in Florentine constitutional history. Thus it is gener-

ally difficult to state precisely what they were, still more difficult to determine their exact bearing. It is by no means always certain whether they were carried by Lorenzo's personal influence in the interest of personal government, or by the leaders of his party to the advantage of the Medicean ring. When it had become clear that the tendency throughout had been in the direction of monarchy, a monarchical construction was put upon past events, even by contemporaries. It is important to remember that what pass for contemporary memoirs or diaries were rarely such in the strict sense of the word. The writers had indeed witnessed the events which they described, but they wrote from memory and retouched with prejudice long after these events. In this consists, for the period here treated, the superiority of unpublished letters and ambassadors' despatches over memoirs or so-called diaries. Letters, of course, that were revised for publication are open to a similar objection. Unfortunately for the internal affairs of Florence we are almost dependent on the scraps of information, often contradictory, supplied by memoirs. This much only is clear, that every measure was directed to the control of the executive, or to financial support of the party in power. Such measures might be, and occasionally were, thrown out, but there was no organised opposition, no power of initiative save with the Government, and practically no "give and take" debate. At Florence the democratic principle still survived that the opposition may vote against a governmental measure, but may not argue it.

Throughout the history of Florence it may be said that in a crisis the danger to the governing party lay usually not in the opposition, but in the institutions which it had itself created to consolidate its power. Thus it was with the Council of a Hundred, whose function it was to appoint the Accoppiatori, who selected the candidates for the Signoria. Usually, indeed, the heads of the ruling party held a midnight caucus, and came next morning to the Council with a list of names for the new committee, which was accepted without demur. On several occasions, however, the Council effected changes in these proposals, and it seemed possible that this independence might find its reflex in the executive. It was found necessary to punish by exclusion from future office a Gonfalonier of Justice, Bardo Corsi, who had, apparently with a view to embarrass the Government, proposed a loan to the King of Naples. The Signoria of July and August, 1470, carried through the Colleges a proposal for a new electing board. The names of all Accoppiatori who had held office since 1434 and five new officials should be placed in a purse, and from these a committee of five should be annually drawn to fill the purses for the Signoria and other offices. This bill failed to pass the Council of a Hundred. It deprived this Council of its chief function, nor is it easy to see how it would have benefited the Government, for the body proposed might well have contained many dissident elements. It gave occasion, moreover, to the cheap claptrap that the city was delivered over to forty-five tyrants. In the following January a temporary expedient was adopted, that

the Accoppiatori should be elected by the Signoria of the ensuing July in concert with the Accoppiatori of the year, and confirmed by a bare majority of the Council in a quorum of two-thirds.

When July arrived a bolder experiment was made. A bill was passed that the Signoria and Accoppiatori should nominate a Balìa of forty members, and with them co-opt a further body of two hundred. In each case the four quarters of Florence were equally represented, while members of the Lesser Arts were selected in the usual proportion of one in four. The duty of this Balìa, to which were added the Signoria and Colleges for the time being, was to undertake a fresh scrutiny for the magistracies, acting as though they were the delegates of the Hundred. Thus the Government secured the control of the lists of candidates for some five years. It also regulated the composition of the Hundred, for the Balìa empowered the Forty to select fifty citizens who had been drawn as Gonfaloniers to form with themselves an elective board for this Council. If the Hundred were deprived of elective functions they received wider administrative powers. Henceforth all matters of State which did not affect the interests of private citizens might become law on approval by the Hundred, without reference to the Councils of the People and the Commune. Their powers were conferred on the Hundred for five years, but were renewed in 1476, and again in 1481.

This important bill immediately followed the visit of the Duke of Milan, and it was expressly stated in the preamble that its object was to facilitate the

maintenance of friendly relations with foreign powers. The Hundred, which consisted of the principal citizens, could, indeed act with more experience, speed, and secrecy, than the larger Councils, and thus inspire allies with confidence. It was a step in the direction of the Venetian system. It is often, but quite erroneously stated, that the Councils of the People and the Commune were suppressed; when the term of the Balìa was over they resumed for many purposes of legislation their previous powers.*

Guicciardini states that the constitutional changes of this year gave to Lorenzo both material strength and reputation; it was now that he began to feel his feet, to shake himself loose from the old family supporters who had become an encumbrance. Henceforth Lorenzo consulted the leaders of his party, but separately, and after consultation would follow his own opinion. He heaped embassies and offices upon the greater Medicean families, but he made them feel that the effective Government was not with them, but with newer men whose credit and advancement depended solely upon himself. Such men were Bernardo Buongirolami, Antonio Pucci, Agnolo Niccolini, Pier Filippo Pandolfini, and Bernardo del Nero, whose names appear in every page of Medicean history for years to come. Lorenzo

* Much confusion exists among authorities original and modern with regard to the acts of this Balìa. Rinuccini, himself a member, alone, perhaps, gives a reasonable, though curt, account. For the above explanation I have had recourse to the MSS. of the Provisioni of 1471 and 1481 preserved in the "Archivio pubblico" at Florence.

used to say that had his father done the same, and showed a firmer front to Luca Pitti and his comrades, he would not have gone nigh to lose the Government in 1466.

Far more suggestive than the obscure fragments of private diaries, and the elaborate verbiage of official documents, which relate to experimental Councils and Committees, are the contemporary letters which prove that Lorenzo was regarded as having it in his power to obtain for a petitioner the highest office of the State. Piero Vespucci frankly reproached him for his exclusion from the Forty, arguing that the services of his father and himself deserved recognition, for had they not in the crisis of 1466 subscribed 600 ducats to the party cause? He assumes in his letter that Lorenzo was responsible not only for his disappointment but for his assessment, representing that his *catasto* had risen to nine ducats, and his *decima* to thirty-six, whereas with an income of 300 ducats more his *catasto* had previously been assessed at four. "If I did not" he concludes "think that I shall be restored to office, and relieved by your favour, I should not believe in Christ nor in any power on earth. It is enough to make a man burst with rage; it is only for love of you that I can be patient. I would never have believed that you could leave me destitute of honour and of profit" (July 7, 1471). Other men of high position, Luigi Guicciardini, Guido Vespucci, Matteo Palmieri, and Bartolommeo Valori made similar requests, the latter appealing to his family of eight sons and one marriageable daughter, whose

prospects would be much improved should Lorenzo think fit to bestow the Gonfalonierate on their father. Of such letters Lorenzo received plenty, and a refusal might always lead to danger. He was young, and by nature hasty and impatient, yet his sister Bianca described him in after years to her son Alessandro Pazzi as using infinite patience in reconciling the malcontents of Piero's *régime*.

Lorenzo was conscious that the family was the unit of Florentine life, and that if this were forgotten, a ruler's most dangerous foes might be those of his own household. Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo had been devoted friends, but a cloud seems to have risen between the cousins, Piero and Pier Francesco. Lorenzo won back the junior line, whose alienation afterwards caused in no slight degree the discomfiture of the younger Piero. The Milanese ambassador, indeed, accustomed to rough and ready measures, thought that the young ruler was too tender; salves might serve their turn, but the time would come when more violent remedies must be applied. Lorenzo's difficulties the envoy ascribed to his father's rule; he was harvesting the sour fruit which Piero had planted.

Lorenzo knew his business as well as the Milanese ambassador. Patience and gentleness were not his only recipes for rule. His party must not only control the administration, but the judicature, and the easiest means was the increase of centralisation. The Eight of Watch and Ward had become a body of high importance; its members were as carefully selected as those of the Signoria. Fresh powers

were now added to this ministry of Justice. On the one hand it drew work from the Mercanzia, the tribunal of commerce, which had been declining in reputation; on the other the Podestà sank yet another stage and became little more than the official who published and executed the measures of the Eight. Judicial reforms were extended from the town to the country, A "Bargello del Contado" was appointed with a mounted police force, whose duty it was to keep order in the rural districts. The office no doubt served a double purpose. The local magistrates or the Vicars sent from Florence had no adequate resources for the maintenance of justice in the wilder parts of Tuscany, and little authority for combination. A mobile and ubiquitous police force was precisely what was needed. But this was also an efficient body to scent and to check any movement against the Government. It perhaps directly owed its origin to a seditious flash in the pan which occurred at Prato. Scouring the country the Bargello could trace the first symptoms of disaffection, prevent the gathering of armed peasants, and make it dangerous for exiles to return to Florentine territory, and for the more lightly punished opponents of the Government to break their bounds.

All these measures have been regarded as so many steps in the development of Lorenzo's absolutism. This much is true, that as the Medicean party became centred in one man, so it acquired more consistency and more strength. It could now draw within its influence institutions which had hitherto

moved in their own orbit. But that the power which possesses the administration should also attempt to "jockey" the judicature is a well-known characteristic of democracy, of the extreme development of party Government. Aristotle himself has criticised the tendency of democracy to blur the lines which divide the executive from the legislature and the judicature. In more modern times, in so far as old institutions and written constitutions will permit, it is customary to subordinate the magistracy to the dominant party, to neglect or to criticise its decisions if they do not concur with popular fancy. It matters little whether the democracy finds its expression in a numerous caucus or in a single minister of its will. There was indeed great danger in these reforms lest the machinery of justice should be abused for party ends, but, as against this, it worked with greater efficiency and rapidity.

Another measure which is ascribed to this period was an attempt, which, however, failed, to reduce the number of the Lesser Arts from fourteen to five. This again is attributed to Lorenzo's desire for arbitrary power. The probable opponents, however, of the Medici at this time lay rather among the Greater than the Lesser Arts. It is true that in the future, under Lorenzo's son, it was from the poorer members of the Greater Arts and from the Lesser that the republican party was mainly recruited, but this was chiefly due to Savonarola's influence among the middle classes. There was no proposal to alter the proportionate representation of the Lesser Arts in the magistracies or the Councils. A fourth of the offices

would still have circulated among the five remaining Arts, which were presumably the most important; their individual political influence would have been more than doubled. For the purposes of absolutism it would have been easier to manipulate the weaker Arts which it was proposed to suppress. It is probable that the measure was purely economic, that it was one of those attacks on corporate property which are confined to no one age, and to no one immoral type of government. These Arts, probably enough, no longer served a useful purpose; their property might reasonably, it was argued, be applied to the reduction of the State debt. At this very time powers were obtained to sell the property of the Mercanzia and the Parte Guelfa for this purpose. That this measure was however only partial is proved by the fact that the latter body is still found in popsession of real estate after the Medicean period; some of this the Republican Government sold to meet its pressing needs, precisely as the Medicean Government is now reported to have done. The estates of the Parte Guelfa were the relics of those huge confiscations by which the nobility had been ruined in bygone centuries; they were intended to support the Guelfic principle within and without the State. This object had long ceased to exist, while funds practically, if not technically, belonging to the State were uselessly locked up. It was no malversation to apply them to diminish the national debt, or, as hereafter, to meet a great national emergency. The financial situation of the Government was already serious. Notwithstanding the general peace there is

little doubt that the ordinary revenues drawn from the indirect taxes were inadequate to meet the increased expenses of the modern State. In Florence, as throughout Europe at this time, the deficiency was ascribed to the mismanagement or corruption of the Government. It was not realised that the rapid increase of international relations, entailing an expensive revolution in the military and diplomatic methods, had outgrown national wealth and the pecuniary possibilities of the population.

If in the political experiments of this early period it is not easy to trace with certainty Lorenzo's predominance, there is no question that he and his brother were the social leaders of the town, the chief purveyors of its amusement. This in a city-state where society and politics are interwoven was at once the path to power and its surest test. Hence it is that Giuliano's tournament which was given in the piazza of Santa Croce in honour of his lady love in 1475, was at once a literary and political event. For posterity it has remained one of the small immortal facts of history because it was celebrated in Politian's verses, but at the time it was the visible glorification of the power of the two young Medici, the house-warming of the monarchy. Even before this, Lorenzo and Giuliano had shown their capacity as social leaders. In March, 1471, the Duke and Duchess of Milan had ridden into Florence with their train of 2000 horses and 200 mules, their followers glittering in gold and silver cloth, the very scullions inappropriately resplendent in silk and velvet. The eight days' visit was an eight days' wonder. While the *suite*

was quartered in the city, the Duke and Duchess lodged in the palace of the Via Larga. The fun was fast and furious, and Lorenzo and his brother led it. The visit, however, ended not without mishap, for in the performance of a sacred play, The Descent of the Holy Ghost, in Santo Spirito, the fine church was burnt. By the more simple Florentines this was regarded as a sign of Divine wrath at the corruption of their guests who had freely eaten meat in defiance of the Lenten season.

The visits of foreign princes, Neapolitan, Milanese, Ferrarese, to Florence, and the pageants which they entailed, were no such trivial matters as they might appear to modern readers who weary of their details. They were the cause, indeed, of much expense and of consequent taxation ; there were professional republicans, such as Rinuccini, who complained that it was money thrown away. This, however, was not the opinion of the people whose betters paid the bill for the popular amusement. It would be interesting to compare the dulness of a modern city with the life of five years in Medicean history, to contrast the unobtrusive objects on which our rates and taxes are expended with the æsthetic splendours of a Renaissance *fête*. Men do not grudge their money for amusement, but for the necessities which they do not need. In Milan at this time it was not the extravagance of the Court, but a paving rate which nearly caused revolt. At Florence every princely visit was a fortnight's festival, and the people knew that they owed these visits mainly to the Medici. The princes, it is true, first greeted the Signoria on

their platform in the great *piazza*, but thence they rode to their hosts in the Via Larga. The Medici were the ostensible representatives of the hospitality of Florence; it was to win the Medici that the royal visitors really came.

Lorenzo's position depended mainly on his reputation with foreign Courts. This was the justification of the Medicean rule. If he could preserve the traditions, at once bold and prudent, of his father and grandfather, there was little to fear from exiles or doctrinaires. How consciously this was realised appears from the words of the Ferrarese ambassador: "The reputation of Lorenzo depends upon the consideration with which he is regarded by the powers of Italy and foreign monarchs. If he did not possess this, he would not be so highly valued in Florence, as is the case." All the town doubtless knew that Edward IV. of England and Ferdinand the Catholic applied to Lorenzo, if they wished favours for their commerce, that Louis XI. commissioned him to arrange a marriage between the Dauphin and a Neapolitan princess. More, however, depended upon Italy. Could the young *parvenu* continue to hold his place among contemporaries more distinguished by blood or by the recognised character of their power? There was in Italy at this moment a generation of young rulers, separated by but a few years of age, all jostling for pre-eminence, all throwing themselves into the artistic and literary movements of the day, all prone to the sudden friendships and rapid enmities of unconsidered youth. These heirs to their fathers' fortunes would vie with

each other in spendour and in ambition; they must all, like riderless horses, race for the *palio*, which in almost every case was to be not their prize but their pall. The three chief groups of these gilded youths are singularly characteristic of the varied sides of Italian life, of the possibilities open to the individual. The Church, the Counting-house, the Army, each had its representatives. In point of family the Medici were, after all, perhaps the most respectable. The Neapolitan princes, royal though they were, were the sons of a Spanish bastard, who knew not, it was said, his father, and was not certain of his mother. The Sforza owed their Duchy to their peasant grandfather's mattock, with which he "tossed up" to decide the question of enlisting in a passing troop of horse. The new Pope's nephews were the sons of a shoemaker, if not the bastards of a friar.

At present these youngsters were fast friends with Lorenzo and each other. Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, was to prove himself in the future brutal and cowardly, but at this time he was a fine swaggering soldier, well fitted in all appearance to pose as the heir to a military monarchy. He professed, moreover, spuriously, as an offended humanist wrote, an interest in the arts; Florentines, at all events, found hearty welcome and lucrative employ at Naples. More sympathetic to Lorenzo was the younger brother, Federigo, the one beloved member of a hated house, the one prince of the fifteenth century of whom no ill is spoken. He showed no peculiar competence in politics or in war; he was to the end unfortunate. But he had the gift, most alien to his

age, of moral courage, and it is at least creditable that this was recognised; that, when defeated, he was never disgraced, and ended his days of exile in dignity and comfort. It is not easy to follow the inner workings of Lorenzo's mind; but this much may be said in our hero's favour, that among his contemporaries, when yet a boy, he selected Federigo as his personal friend. This was an intimacy irrespective of politics, and undisturbed by them, displaying itself, it may be urged, in superficial interests, in art and literature, but based upon some deeper sympathy of character; a common admiration of Dante is not sufficient ground on which to build the friendship of a life. Equally intimate with Lorenzo was Alfonso's Milanese wife, Ippolita Sforza, who became at Naples the centre of cultivation. With her Lorenzo maintained a constant correspondence, which, in an hour of danger, served him in good stead.

At Milan, domestic quarrels early divided the large family which Francesco Sforza left. The reigning Duke was some years older than Lorenzo. He had none of his father's military talent, but he inherited the desire to keep the peace of Italy, to maintain the alliance of the Medici, and to exclude the foreigner. Of his personal character the less that is said the better. That he was cruel, lustful, and extortionate there can be little doubt, though the disgusting details of his vices smack somewhat of the morbid historian's lamp. Of his five brothers, four were restless, shifty, and ambitious. Two were already exiled, and two only survived to make a name

in history. These were the celebrated Ludovico Moro, who was a few years younger than Lorenzo, and the Cardinal Ascanio, who had bad fortune in never securing the *tiara* for which he spun his webs so long.

Eminent also among those young bloods were the nephews of the new Pope, Sixtus IV. They had been hoisted into their high position from the lower ranks of society or the Church. But they were beggars mounted. Had Pietro Riario, the Pope's favourite, lived, he would have drained all Europe. He heaped benefice on benefice, yet infinite pluralities could not have met his needs. Within the two years of his cardinalate he spent in outward splendour and scarcely secret vice, 200,000 ducats. To pay his debts the Pope put the sees that fell vacant up for sale. It was fortunate that his own excesses wore him to death when he was but twenty-eight. Yet the Carmelite friar had bravely played his part. He was beloved in Rome, and made himself welcome in Venice, in Florence, and at Milan. He left his stamp upon the history of the Pope's temporal power, for he set the Curia on a level with royal courts, adorning it with the paraphernalia of actors and musicians, courtesans and race-horses. Wider views have been ascribed to him; he would crown the Duke of Milan King of Lombardy, if the Duke would make the Papal See hereditary in his person. There is something still that is attractive in the young delicate face in Melozzo's picture in the Vatican, with its fresh colouring, its distant gaze, and the weak, sensuous mouth.

SIXTUS IV.

Pietro and Girolamo Riario, Giuliano and Giovanni della Rovere, and Platina the librarian. Picture by Melozzo da Forli in the Vatican.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

Pietro's brother, Girolamo, succeeded to his influence. A grocer's assistant or an ex-custom house clerk, Girolamo never became a gentleman. Restless and pushing as he was, he might never have made a name in history but for his tragical connection with the Medici, and his own violent end. Yet even he must have the credit of being the patron of Melozzo, and of bringing him to Rome to paint the staircase of the Vatican. Girolamo was intended by Sixtus to create a state, even as his brother had formed a court. There were other nephews, the sons of the Pope's brother. Of these two were designed, together with Girolamo, to connect the Papacy by marriage with other Italian powers. Thus only could it enter into the national system of alliance on equal terms. Leonardo della Rovere, who bore the old imperial title of Præfectus Urbis, wedded a bastard of the King of Naples, while Giovanni won the daughter of Federigo of Urbino, whose only son was weakly and had no heirs. Girolamo's wife was Caterina Sforza, a daughter of Galeazzo Maria, a bastard, it is true, yet brought up by Bona of Savoy among her own children. Thus these Papal upstarts had better fortune, or less modesty, in the matrimonial market than the Medici. Meanwhile, to secure the succession to his family, Sixtus was filling the College of Cardinals with his creatures and relatives. Rafaello Riario, his great-nephew, received his hat while yet a child, while Giuliano della Rovere contributed little at present except a vote ; the future Julius II. was regarded as stupid and devoid of education.

Among this motley field Lorenzo had to ride his race. He had succeeded to the Triple Alliance, while over against it stood the league of the Pope and Venice. The election, however, of Sixtus seemed likely to produce a change in the policy of the Papacy, while the relations of Florence with the two monarchies were not always easy to preserve. Within the Triple Alliance the closest tie was between the Medici and the Sforza. It was Lorenzo's policy not to loosen this, but so far to draw closer his connection with Naples, as not to become the satellite of Milan. As the Medici had supported Galeazzo Maria on his father's sudden death, so the Milanese ruler was prepared to give prompt aid to the two young Medici. Sforza and Medici, it was believed, could only stand by leaning on each other. The Duke's protection was too patronising to be agreeable. He was plainly wishing to isolate Lorenzo, so that he might be completely dependent on himself, warning him against the overtures of Ferrante, jealous of the favour which Lorenzo enjoyed with Sixtus and his nephews, of whom Pietro Riario became Archbishop of Florence. So too he was displeased that Lorenzo's skilled diplomatist, Giovanni Lanfredini, had warm assurances of the friendliness of Venice. Thus, while professing unaltered attachment to Milan, Lorenzo had to conceal his correspondence with the Court of Naples, using the Count of Urbino as a go-between. Ferrante invited Lorenzo to establish a branch of the Medici bank at Naples, and the poet Pulci was sent there, on a literary pretext, to use the brain and the

ongue, of which he boasted, in his patron's service. Lorenzo's love of riding and racing found a counterpart in Alfonso, and an interchange of horses was a diplomatic opportunity. The supposed resources of he Florentine banker caused him to be much courted by the needy Neapolitan royal household; Lorenzo's ultured friend Ippolita would beg for a loan of 2000 ducats without interest, on the security of her jewels nd the word of an honest woman. Nevertheless it vas needful to be prudent, for the friendship of Milan vas after all the most essential and the most reliable. Italy was fortunately in a condition of unusual eace. The death of Paul II. had closed the hostile elations between the Pope and Naples. Sixtus, to vin the advancement of his nephews, had commuted he Neapolitan tribute for a white palfrey which vas annually despatched from the royal *hara* to the Vatican. Venice was thoroughly alarmed at the apture of Negroponte by the Turks. It seemed ikely that she would join the Pope and the King of Naples in an attempt to check the Ottoman advance. There was a wish indeed to convert this into general Italian league, but Milan and Florence ere less interested than the other powers. Sforza eclined to commit himself, and the Florentine ambassador at Naples, Jacopo Guicciardini, had orders ot to ratify the treaty unless Milan would accede. orenzo's personal agent, Pulci, was, indeed, on the ther side; in a playful letter he hoped that Lent ight convert his master and make him a good hristian. But Lorenzo was too practical to be interested in crusades.

In thus detaching Florence from the other three powers the influence of Galeazzo Maria was unfortunate. He nearly succeeded in producing an open breach with Naples by working on Lorenzo's impatience and imprudence. The little state formed by the promontory of Piombino had fallen under the house of the Appiani. It would have formed a most valuable addition to the Florentine sea-board, and a protection to Leghorn. Lorenzo, encouraged by Galeazzo Maria, attempted to surprise Piombino by the aid of exiles and adventurers from the mountains of Pistoia. The plot was discovered, the King of Naples showed his teeth, and Lorenzo withdrew, as best he could, from a false position. This was but a passing cloud. Lorenzo and Giuliano were untiring in their efforts to make new friends and to keep old ones. Giuliano returned the Duke of Milan's visit and was then fêted at Venice, while Lorenzo went to Rome with the embassy, which the Republic sent to congratulate Sixtus on his election. The peace of Italy seemed secure, and Lorenzo's gravest anxiety might be for the moment the loss of a favourite falcon while he was hawking with Ferrante's huntsmen in the Pisan hills. "Let not your Excellence wonder," wrote the Ferrarese envoy to his master, "if I send you notice of such events, for even here others take much count of them. Peace is spreading so far and wide in Italy that unless the impossible occurs, there will be more to say of the battles of birds and dogs, than of arms and feats of war."

At peace abroad and secure in Florence, Lorenzo

had trouble only in the subject cities. In 1470 a handful of the exiles of 1466, headed by Bernardo Nardi, rushed the town of Prato, imprisoned the Florentine Podestà, and promised independence and exemption from taxation to the citizens. Prato is so near to Florence that even its temporary occupation must have caused alarm; in 1512 its sack by the Spaniards decided the surrender of the capital, and the overthrow of the republican government. Fortunately a young knight of Rhodes, Giorgio Ginori, who happened to be in the town, with much presence of mind collected a band of volunteers, and overwhelmed the rebels. Retribution was rapid and severe, for it was found that the exiles had spread a propaganda among the ignorant and martial peasants of the neighbouring mountains.

Another bolt from the blue was the rebellion of Volterra. Here, however, Lorenzo himself contributed to call down the lightning. As a coming Italian war arose from salt, the revolt of Volterra had its origin in alum. A dispute arose between the commune of Volterra and a company which had obtained, irregularly as was alleged, a lease of an alum pit in the Maremma. The commune and the company being unable to come to terms, the former forcibly occupied the pit while the company appealed to Florence. It is stated both that the suzerain city claimed some share in the royalties of the mine, and that Florentine shareholders were largely interested. The plaintiff company was reinstated, while, as a precautionary measure, several of the older spirits were removed to Florence. Popular

indignation ran high. A riot ensued in which two of the shareholders were killed, while the Florentine Podestà, who had attempted to protect them, was only rescued by the intervention of the Volterran Signoria, which then and afterwards did all in its power to prevent a rupture.

It is uncertain what part Lorenzo had so far played. He was greatly interested in alum, for he was lessee of the far more important deposits of Tolfa in the Papal territory. It is suggested that he wished to create a corner in alum, that he had acquired an interest in the company, and that he was personally responsible for the award. That a Florentine court could decide a judicial question on its merits was an alternative which did not suggest itself. There is little or no proof that Lorenzo had a personal interest in the mine; his name does not appear among the shareholders. The deposit was far too worthless to compete with the mines of Tolfa, and indeed was abandoned after the suppression of the revolt. Both parties, it is said, referred the first decision to Lorenzo, but the outrages took place before his answer was given. Lorenzo was certainly responsible for the severe measures against the subject town, but he was prompted probably by political rather than by commercial motives. Tommaso Soderini argued in favour of a peaceful solution, and this was perhaps sufficient to set Lorenzo on the other side. He found support in popular opinion. Volterra had traditions of independence; her incorporation had been a voluntary action; she professed to be a partner rather than a subject. In 1429 she

had risen against the Catasto, and had then been forced to accept a Podestà from Florence, whereas previously the suzerain city had only sent a Capitano, or military commandant. She still ruled an extensive territory lying round the strong hill-city, and stretching to the sea.

The Florentines seized the opportunity to reduce the Volterran spirit of independence. The emergency was considered so critical that the usual Ten of War was doubled, and its members chosen from the most influential citizens, of whom Lorenzo was naturally one. A sum of 100,000 florins was borrowed from the State fund for dowering girls, a most unwholesome precedent. Federigo of Urbino was placed in command of a force of some 5500 men, to which force the Pope and the Duke of Milan sent contingents. Volterra hoped for aid from Venice and from Naples. She received some slight support from Siena and the Lord of Piombino. As often happened with Italian cities the country people were ill affected to the town, and thus the Florentine force marched almost without opposition over the rolling hills from the valley of the Elsa, and attacked Volterra from the south. The situation of the town, 1900 feet above the sea, might well make it impregnable to fifteenth century artillery. But since its sack by Sulla the old Etruscan walls had been far too big for its shrunken people, and could neither be adequately garrisoned nor repaired. Federigo's second-rate artillery was sufficient to knock the walls to pieces, the mercenaries refused to fight, and after twenty-five days' siege the city capitulated. On the

entry of the troops a scuffle led to an uproar, and that to a general sack. The inhabitants of the luckless town were brutally handled; the Florentine generals and commissaries were powerless to restrain their ill-disciplined soldiery. The soldier with whom the uproar originated is said to have been a Venetian, and a mercenary, perhaps in Volterran service. Horrible as was the sack, nothing is more certain than that it was an accident. Yet historians once and again have laid it to Lorenzo's charge. It would be as reasonable to ascribe the more deliberate sack of Badajoz to Mr. Perceval, or the murder of Buluwayo's envoys to the British premier. At Florence the regret for the misfortune was sincere; it was not the interest of the suzerain to win back a ruined subject. Whatever may have been his motives, none showed more sympathy than Lorenzo. He personally visited the town, distributed relief among the sufferers, reassured the inhabitants, and during the rest of his life spent largely on the estates which he had purchased in the neighbourhood.

The successful general received, as the reward of victory, a silver helmet, the Florentine citizenship, and a deserted villa bought from Luca Pitti. For Lorenzo it was a great political triumph, and his reputation was increased. In later years he expressed his opinion that the crisis was really serious, and that had not money been borrowed from the Dowry Fund, it might have ended badly. This much may be true that, with less delay, Volterra might have patched her walls, while the conflict might have spread through Italy, for Venice was not yet surely

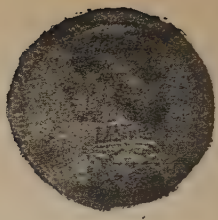
THE CASTLE OF VOLTERRA.

Built by Lorenzo de' Medici after the sack of 1472.

reconciled to Florence, whereas the King of Naples was alienated by Lorenzo's schemes against Piombino. For the future Volterra was made safe. On the crest of the hill to the southward, upon the site of the Bishop's palace, was built the huge castle, which, kept in order as one of the chief Italian prisons, remains as a monument of the military architecture of the Laurentian age. The city was deprived of its jurisdiction over the country districts, while its mineral rights over salt, sulphur, alum, and copper were vested in the sovereign republic. Volterra never quite forgave the Florentines. A revengeful Volterran played a part in the tragedy of the Pazzi plot. To the present day, when alum has given place to borax and alabaster, street boys, white with the dust of their workshop, will point out the spot where the Florentines lay in ambush, and grow warm over the treachery of the successful rival.

Volterra.

Pisa.



Ruberto San Severino—Costanzo Sforza.

CHAPTER IV.

Lorenzo's disputes with the Pope—Rivalry between Medici and Pazzi—Plot of the Pazzi and Girolamo Riario—Assassination of Giuliano de' Medici—Punishment of the conspirators.

1472–1478.

THE harmony of the five Italian States may be said to have been complete from 1469 to 1474, and from the latter year to 1476 only a keen ear could have detected that two of them were not in tune. It has been seen that the relations between the Pope and the Medici were peculiarly friendly. Not only had Sixtus granted to Lorenzo the valuable lease of the Papal alum mines, and sent aid in the campaign against Volterra, but he had accorded to the Medici bank at Rome the lucrative privilege of receiving the Papal revenues. Lorenzo would have pushed his advantage farther; he wished to obtain a cardinalate for his brother Giuliano. Sixtus IV. seemed well disposed to agree, but the matter hung fire, and

Giuliano remained a layman. This was a disappointment to Lorenzo, for he was anxious to obtain a voice in the Consistory, which was regarded as the proof of an equality with other princely powers. There was, however, no outward sign of bitterness. Pietro Riario was welcomed as Archbishop of Florence. The friendship of Lorenzo and the Pope was, indeed, exciting the jealousy of Milan.

The cause of all subsequent trouble was the little town of Imola. This Romagnol city, lying on the high-road south of Bologna, had belonged to the Manfredi, who ruled the adjoining town of Faenza. Taddeo Manfredi, its lord, had fallen into the power of the Duke of Milan, and it was generally understood that his property was for sale. Lorenzo would gladly have bought it. To the north and south the expansion of Florentine territory seemed for the present blocked; she could only extend across the Apennines, and this with much greater advantage to her growing Levantine trade. If she could secure Imola, she would have a position on the main southern road, she would be within easy distance of the Adriatic, and be able to draw much closer the connection with her traditional clients, the Manfredi of Faenza. Imola could readily be brought into touch with Tuscan Romagna, and from the town there lay a practicable pass across the Apennines.

Sixtus, however, had already resolved to found a state for his nephews in Romagna, and thus indirectly recover this half-lost province for the Church. He induced the Duke of Milan to annul his contract with Florence, and to sell Imola to the

Holy See, engaging to invest Girolamo Riario therewith on his marriage with the Duke's natural daughter, Caterina. The purchase money was 40,000 ducats, an exorbitant price, as Sixtus thought. The Medici bank did everything in its power to prevent the negotiation of this sum, but Imola passed to Girolamo, and it was soon clear that he had views on Faenza and Forlì. Misunderstandings naturally increased. The Pope had trouble with the boisterous factions in his Umbrian towns, Todi, Spoleto, and Città di Castello, and this was the more annoying as they lay on the line of communication with his nephew's Romagnol territory. In Città di Castello, Niccolò Vitelli had expelled the rival family of Giustini, defied the Pope's award, and desperately held the town against a large Papal force. The Florentines, fearing for their neighbouring city of Borgo San Sepolcro, to which their only legal title was a mortgage from a previous Pope, massed troops upon the frontier. The Pope's nephews accused Lorenzo of subsidising Niccolò Vitelli in his resistance. This, however, the Signoria stoutly denied, while the Venetian ambassador assured the Pope that it was a slander against this great man, who had only executed the resolutions of his government, which conduced to the peace of Italy, and the honour and advantage of the Church.

Another cause of offence was ecclesiastical. On the death of Pietro Riario, Sixtus had wished to promote Francesco Salviati to the archbishopric of Florence, but had yielded to Lorenzo's wish that his brother-in-law, Rinaldo Orsini, should be appointed.

When the archbishopric of Pisa fell vacant, the Pope saw an opportunity of compensating the disappointed Salviati. The Florentines, however, were strongly opposed to this election, and Lorenzo was forced to become the mouthpiece of the opposition. What was the cause of the objection does not seem certain, but in view of the smouldering hatred with which the Pisans regarded their conquerors, it was essential that the Archbishop should be a trustworthy adherent of the government. From the correspondence there seems no reason to presuppose any personal ill-will towards Salviati on Lorenzo's part. The Pope would not allow himself to be thwarted the second time, and the Florentines retaliated by refusing to Salviati the possession of his see.

While Lorenzo had been drifting farther from the Papacy he had improved the friendly relations with Venice, which he had from the first encouraged. In September, 1474, a league was formed between Florence, Milan, and Venice, with power to the Pope and Naples to enter it. The Pope had, it has been seen, at once cultivated the friendship of Ferrante. With a view to the advancement of his family, he had, in the opinion of the Cardinals, seriously prejudiced the suzerain rights of the Holy See over the kingdom of Naples. Feeling themselves endangered by the union of the three Northern states, Pope and King drew yet closer to each other. Ferrante visited Rome in February, 1475, and a formal Papal-Neapolitan alliance was effected. Nevertheless there was no outward quarrel; Lorenzo,

Riario, and the Neapolitan princes continued a friendly correspondence, and Lorenzo at all events had every interest in reconciliation.

The light clouds which had lately gathered might easily have blown over, but for a sudden storm which burst at Milan, and which may be said to have unsettled the political atmosphere of Italy for all time. On December 26, 1476, as the Duke of Milan entered St. Stephen's Church, he was stabbed to death by three Milanese noblemen, and their bravos. So sudden was the onslaught that the ambassadors, who tried to support the Duke as he staggered forwards, had no conception of what had happened. Of the three assassins, Lampugnani was a ruined spendthrift, a desperate adventurer, who had been condemned to death by Francesco Sforza and pardoned by his son ; Visconti avenged an insult to his sister, while Olgiati was a republican idealist who would fain play the Brutus. The instigator of the plot was a teacher of rhetoric, Cola Montano, one of the cowardly literary agitators who never dare face the deeds to which they drive their scholars. The murderers were well prepared. They had prayed to St. Ambrose, the guardian of Milanese liberties, and to St. Stephen, the protomartyr, to bless their effort. They had in a quiet alley behind Sant' Ambrogio over and over again rehearsed the deed, practising upon each other with sheathed daggers, providing for every conceivable circumstance, imagining every possible attitude of their victim. It was Lampugnani who struck the first blow. Thrusting his way through the crowd he fell on his knee

before the Duke, and presenting a petition, stabbed him in the belly with a dagger which was hidden in his sleeve. Then there was a rain of dagger thrusts as the Duke lay beneath his assassins on the pavement. So great was the confusion that all three murderers might have escaped, as did Olgiati and Visconti. Lampugnani tripped in a woman's train, and was with his bravos caught and hung. The capture of his accomplices was only a few days delayed. There was no attempt at a rising against authority, no sympathy with the assassins. Olgiati in his hiding place fainted as he heard the howls of the populace, whom he had hoped to free, and who dragged Lampugnani's mangled body from street to street. Yet Sixtus IV. was right when he cried, on the arrival of the news, "The peace of Italy is dead." The results of the young Duke's murder—he was only thirty-two—reach far beyond this volume.

The Milanese regency was assumed by the Duke's widow, Bona of Savoy, on behalf of her infant son. By her side was Francesco Sforza's Counsellor, Cecco Simonetta; Florence at once sent two of her most active diplomatists, Luigi Guicciardini and Tommaso Soderini to support the government. All seemed to be in the Regent's favour. A revolt of Genoa against Milanese suzerainty was quelled. The late Duke's restless brothers, who had returned to Milan, were temporarily reconciled. From them however the trouble came. Their oldest cousin, Ruberto San Severino, instigated them in their intrigues, and the Duchess was forced to exile Sforza, Ascanio, and Ludovico. Octaviano had been drowned in attempt-

ing to swim the Adda. To Lorenzo de' Medici the importance of these events was this, that in place of a strong government which could protect him there was a weak regency which he must protect, that the three exiled Sforza were free to breed disturbance in Rome or Naples where San Severino had large estates. A foreign enemy might now act against the Medici with better prospects of success, and it was becoming certain in 1477 that Sixtus was such an enemy. A final cause of offence was the support alleged to have been given in 1477 by Lorenzo to Carlo Fortebraccio. This condottiere on attempting to recover the position of his family in Perugia had been discouraged by Florence, whose government wished to draw the Papal town into her alliance. He then turned his forces against Siena and raided her unprotected territory. Lorenzo induced him to withdraw, when Papal and Neapolitan forces were in the field. But the mischief was done and Siena was added to the enemies of the Medici. Lorenzo had already asked his Venetian allies upon what assistance he could rely; he was profoundly irritated against the Papacy, saying in February, 1477, that, if it were not for the scandal, he would prefer three or four popes to one. The Pope, however, unaided, was no formidable foe; all depended upon the attitude of the King of Naples. With the Medici, Ferrante had no direct cause of quarrel; the offence was the friendliness of Florence towards Venice, his rival in the Adriatic and the Greek peninsula. The diagnosis of the Neapolitan envoy, Tomacelli, was correct. The King, he said, was angry

because, while Cosimo had always striven to depress Venetian power, Lorenzo thought himself cleverer than his father, and tried to raise it. Lorenzo, in fact, had attempted too much; he was running with the hare and hunting with the hounds; he had lightly endangered the Triple Alliance, upon which depended the stability of his house.

Within Florence the young Medici were not so firmly set but that there was peril of sedition and opposition. There was always danger lest they should lose control of the ambitious aristocracy of which they were but *primi inter pares*, and secondly lest the malcontents of their party should find support in a foreign power. These dangers were combined in the Pazzi plot, which, but for a series of accidents, might have overthrown the supremacy of the Medici for ever. Lorenzo would have been for posterity but the name of a gifted youth who fell prematurely in an obscure conspiracy. The Medici were surrounded by citizens of equal birth and political capacity. In their very evenness perhaps consisted the security of the ruling family. Opposition, if it arose, was certain to connect itself less with political principles than with family pride. Above all, therefore, Lorenzo must make it his care that no other house should become sufficiently powerful to be formidable. In the great house of Pazzi here was the possibility of rivalry. They were among the noble families who had been by Cosimo qualified for office, but they contradict the assertion of Guicciardini that such houses were by popular dislike deprived of all chances of election. Offices

and embassies had been showered upon the Pazzi. Piero de' Pazzi had in 1462, on his return from an embassy to France, been knighted by the people; he had purposely stayed behind his colleagues that his public entry might be the more remarkable. It resembled, indeed, an ancient triumph. This vanity was characteristic of the house. They openly vied with the Medici in wealth, in the credit which they enjoyed throughout Italy and abroad, in commercial enterprise which extended to all parts of the world. Within Florence they were connected with most of the greater families; they were generous and sumptuous in their mode of life. Yet the Pazzi had never been quite popular, for the Florentines loved the appearance of equality, and the house had not the manners to disguise its excessive pride.

How far back a recognised rivalry between Medici and Pazzi extended it is difficult to decide. In a letter, however, of Alessandra Strozzi to her son written in March, 1462, there is a remarkable and prophetic phrase: "I must remind you that those who are on the side of the Medici have always done well, and those on the side of the Pazzi the contrary, —so be careful." Two years later when Piero called in his debts and produced a financial crisis, the same lady mentions the Pazzi firm among others as "being shaky." But there was, as yet, no great ill-will, for Lorenzo's favourite sister Bianca was married to Guglielmo Pazzi, the son of the knighted Piero. It is probable, indeed, that Lorenzo took precautions that his connections should not secure a hold upon

A LADY, PROBABLY OF THE MEDICI FAMILY.

She wears the Medici gem of Marsyas. Portrait by Sandro Botticelli in the Museum at Frankfort.

(*From a portrait by Kühl & Co.*)

he chief executive offices; he would not allow to hem that share of honours which they thought they ad a right to claim.

The first obvious offence came from the Pazzi. orenzo, it is said, had requested the Roman branch f the firm not to aid the Pope in the purchase of mola. Francesco Pazzi, head of the Roman bank, ot only advanced three-fourths of the purchase oney, but informed Sixtus of Lorenzo's request. he result of this disclosure was that the Pope ransferred his lucrative account from the Medici to he Pazzi bank. Henceforth Francesco is found in lose intimacy with Girolamo Riario, and thus the ombination of internal disaffection with external anger was effected. The Medici now took their evenge. Francesco was on some frivolous pretext, s he thought, summoned by the Eight to appear at lorence. Above all it was attributed to Lorenzo hat a retrospective law was passed giving the prefernce, in case of intestacy, to collateral males over the aughters of the deceased. This struck the Pazzi ery hard, for the rich inheritance of Giovanni Borpmeo passed, not to his daughter the wife of Gioanni Pazzi, but to his nephews, the Borromei, ntimate friends of the Medici. This was in 1476, nd in the following year the hostility of the interal and external foes culminated in conspiracy. leanwhile the Medici were totally unaware of the xtent of the bitterness of the Pazzi. Giuliano, inced, is said to have warned his brother of his imrudence in the case of the Borromeo inheritance, ut the two families remained on terms of the most

intimate acquaintance, as will be seen from the story of the tragedy itself.

The plot was hatched at Rome between Girolamo Riario and Francesco Pazzi, the latter of whom had persuaded the Pope's nephew, that if Lorenzo lived and Sixtus died, the state of Imola and all hope of other Romagnol possessions were lost. Francesco was in fact the hero or the villain of the tragedy. A bachelor, who had given no hostages to fortune: he was of the stuff of which conspirators are made: a small, thin, restless man, conceited in manners and dandified in dress, passionate and jealous, who felt bound to carry through, without fear of God or man, whatever passed into his head. Into this conspiracy eagerly entered the injured Archbishop of Pisa, Francesco Salviati. A mercenary captain of some distinction, Gian Batista da Montesecco, was to play the chief part in the assassination scene. Murder was to be supplemented by invasion. Niccolò da Tolentino was in readiness to invade Tuscany from the east, while Lorenzo Giustini, who hated the Medici as the alleged supporters of his rival Vitelli, would march on Florence from Città di Castello. For such extensive movements the Pope's assent and co-operation were essential. Sixtus was eager to depose Lorenzo by force or fraud; he was prepared for kidnapping but would have no blood. Girolamo was called a scoundrel when he hinted that murder might be necessary. Much argument has been wasted on the part played by Sixtus, by historians anxious to absolve the Pope from the guilt of murder. It was certain that the attempt to

kidnap or depose Lorenzo must end in bloodshed; a jury, it is to be feared, would find Sixtus, in spite of his protestations, guilty as an accessory before the fact.

Francesco Pazzi found great difficulty in persuading the Florentine branch of his house to take part in his scheme, and yet without their aid success was hopeless. It is unlikely that the plot was confided to Guglielmo, the husband of Lorenzo's sister. Renato, who was credited with more brains than the rest of his house, and who enjoyed unusual popularity, protested against the crime. Let them have patience, he urged, let time work; Lorenzo's affairs were in such confusion that in a few years failure was inevitable; wealth and credit lost, political power would follow; let the Pazzi rather advance such sums as he needed at high interest, in the certainty that with slight loss to themselves, they would be helping the Medici to fail the sooner. He watched his relations carefully, and feeling the crisis to be near at hand, retired to his country house to escape its consequences. The recognised head of the family, however, was Jacopo, the uncle of all the younger members, a citizen capable and respected, a perfect gentleman, says Guicciardini, but for his habits of blasphemy and gambling. These vices, if Politian may be believed, he certainly carried to excess, for he played night and day, and if he lost would curse gods and men, and dash the dice board on the head of the first person who came near him. His excitability betrayed itself in his pale anxious face, in the constant movement of the head; his mouth, his

eyes, his feet were never quiet. Jacopo had no legitimate children, and this increased his influence with his family; he was likely to be the more useful to his relatives, both during life and after it. The head of the house at first threw cold water on the scheme. He hated Lorenzo, but he gave mature consideration to the difficulties, and raised objections. Gambler as he was, he hesitated to risk his wealth and comfort, his fine position, on the chances of the knife. The assent of the Pope, promises of foreign support, real and alleged, from Naples, Urbino, Ferrara, and Siena at length convinced him. But he, like Sixtus, shied at blood; he would head the revolution, others must ply the dagger.

Nothing is easier than to murder one man, few things more difficult than to murder two. This difficulty met the conspirators from the first. To kill Lorenzo was easy, for he constantly walked alone, unarmed and without suspicion. Yet this was worse than useless, if Giuliano lived, for the younger brother was the more popular; aristocracy and populace would both have gathered round him. At first there were schemes to attack the brothers separately, hopes that Giuliano might visit a possible *fiancée* at Piombino, that Lorenzo might be decoyed to Rome. It was dangerous to delay. Florence must therefore be the scene, and Lorenzo and Giuliano must be found together. Montesecco had already been sent to examine the ground; he had interviewed Lorenzo at Cafaggiuolo, and perhaps his resolution was a little shaken; this man that he was going to kill behaved to him so kindly, a brother could not have

offered more. Francesco Pazzi now went to Florence, Salviati to his Pisan see, the auxiliary troops gathered on the frontiers. A younger member of the Papal family was made an unconscious accomplice of the plot. Rafaello Sansoni, Cardinal of San Giorgio, a nephew of Girolamo Riario, was a mere boy studying at the University of Pisa. He was made to leave the town on pretext of his appointment as governor at Perugia, and while staying with Jacopo Pazzi at Montughi, a mile from Florence, was invited to dine with Lorenzo at Fiesole. The conspirators thought that their chance was come, but Giuliano was unwell and did not join the party. Lorenzo was then told that the young Cardinal wished to see the treasures of the Via Larga, and the company received an invitation for the Sunday before Ascension. After mass the party would return to the Medici palace for dinner, and as the two young hosts arose from table they should be simultaneously slain.

It was a motley crew that gathered in Florence on the Sunday morning. The plot comprised the seizure of the Signoria's palace, and the rising of the people, and therefore the number of the conspirators was dangerously large. Montesecco had brought a troop of some twenty Perugian exiles, Salviati had a suite of Spanish servants. A gang of desperadoes attached itself to one or other of the principals. Antonio Maffei of Volterra, Apostolic Scribe, alone perhaps had a creditable motive; he could not forgive the humiliation of his native town. Stefano da Bagnone was a parish priest of bad repute who acted as secre-

tary to Jacopo Pazzi, and as tutor to his bastard daughter. Napoleon Franzesi of San Gemignano was an adherent of Guglielmo Pazzi, Bernardo Baroncelli had squandered away his livelihood. Most interesting of the subordinate assassins was Jacopo Bracciolini, a type well known to modern anarchy. No man, it is said, ever did a kind action without repenting it. The Medici had made the fortunes of Jacopo's father, the great scholar Poggio. The son inherited few of his father's qualities, but a matchless faculty for slander. He was tortured with envy, indiscriminately abusing all who were of a social position above himself, all who had earned some literary fame. In a few years he had run through his patrimony, was deep in debt, and ready to sell himself to any purchaser. Yet money was not his only motive; he had an unbalanced mind, craving for confusion for its own sake. Puffed up with a wider reading of history than his associates, he used his peculiar gift of frothy talk to inflict his tales upon any circle in which he found himself, until reasonable men avoided him as a well-known bore.

All seemed ready for the conspirators, when at the last moment it was found that Giuliano de' Medici would not dine. Delay was impossible, on that evening Niccolò da Tolentino and Giustini would be before the gates of Florence. The deed must therefore be done in church. From this, however, the soldier Montesecco shrank; he did not dare add sacrilege to murder. Thus it was hastily arranged that the two priests, Stefano and Maffei, who had no scruples as to holy places, should kill Lo-

renzo, that Francesco Pazzi and Baroncelli should answer for Giuliano, while Salviati should leave the Cathedral and secure the Palazzo Pubblico.

Meanwhile the Medici palace was garnished for the banquet, the choice furniture was displayed, the plate and the statuary grouped in the court beneath Donatello's medallions, or in the garden which lay beyond the open *loggia*. Hither rode the young Cardinal on the Sunday morning. After changing his riding clothes he descended the great staircase, and met Lorenzo at its foot on his way from church. Lorenzo turned back to the Cathedral with his guest. Then a band of the conspirators rode up to the palace door, and asked: "Where is Lorenzo? where is Giuliano?" On being answered that they had already gone to the Cathedral, they followed them thither. It was found, however, that Giuliano had not arrived, so Baroncelli and Francesco Pazzi went to fetch him. The invalid hesitated; he was not well, he was not properly dressed for church. At length he was persuaded. As the three walked up the nave together Francesco is said to have playfully passed his arm round his victim's waist; he felt that he had no cuirass. He could not even wear his dagger, because it knocked the sore upon his leg. Salviati meanwhile excused himself and left the church. It was now a matter of minutes till the end, and as to the exact moment of the deed the eye-witnesses are at disaccord. Was it the *Agnus Dei*, was it the Elevation of the Host, was it the *Ite Missa est?* None can say for certain, and this is not unnatural. The Mass went monotonously for-

ward, and the brilliant company paid little attention to its details. Lorenzo and Giuliano were, separately from each other, strolling round the choir, as was their wont. The choir was then, as now, an octagon corresponding to the lines of the cupola. It was fenced, not by the marble screen which visitors now see, but by low wooden panelling with tall pillars at intervals, the work of Ghiberti. Thus the wide gangway of the nave separates and gives free passage round the choir, and from this open space behind the altar lead doors into the northern and southern Sacristies. At the fatal moment Giuliano was on the north of the choir near the Chapel of the Holy Cross, and the door which enters opposite the Via dei Servi. Lorenzo was on the farther or southern side. The tinkling of the Mass bell was the assassins' signal. Baroncelli cried: "There! traitor!" and plunged his dagger into Giuliano's side, the victim fell sidewards against Francesco, who struck him full in the chest. Then staggering a few paces forwards he fell, and the Pazzi dashed upon him, striking him through and through. Servants joined in the attack, and Giuliano's corpse was found to have nineteen wounds. Lorenzo had better fortune. With the knife everything depends on speed; the motion of the arm should not be marked, a low thrust is therefore more fatal than a high. The priest Maffei put his hand upon Lorenzo's shoulder to steady the blow, the head turned and the stroke was missed. In a moment Lorenzo had drawn his sword, and wrapped his mantle round his arm. A second stroke just grazed his neck, and then the two

priests fled. But Francesco Pazzi and Baroncelli were now upon him. Two of the Cavalcanti and other youths, with their arms protected by their robes, gathered round Lorenzo. Baroncelli stabbed Francesco Nori dead; the faithful bank manager and diplomatist, who had been standing near Giuliano, had exposed himself to delay the rush. In this or in the previous scuffle Francesco was wounded in the leg. Lorenzo, retreating, jumped the low rail into the choir, and running in front of the high altar, passed through the wicket by which the choir enters, and so gained the northern Sacristy. Politian and other friends pushed the heavy bronze gates of Luca della Robbia in the pursuers' faces.

Only a few moments had passed, and few of the spectators, if any, realised what had happened. Crouching by the altar was the terror-stricken Cardinal, who was later led to the other Sacristy for safety. Lorenzo's brother-in-law, Guglielmo Pazzi, was heard loudly protesting his innocence. The choristers were flying hither and thither; there was a general belief that the roof had fallen in, a not unnatural idea, for the heavy gilded ball and cross had but recently been placed upon the airy structure of the cupola. Meanwhile within the dingy Sacristy, under the massive carved festoons of flowers, among the cherubs of Donatello, and the kneeling angels of Luca della Robbia, Lorenzo and his followers were gathered in terror of their lives. Some one said that the dagger with which Lorenzo's neck was grazed might probably be poisoned, whereon a youth, Antonio Ridolf, sucked the wound. Battering was

heard outside the great bronze gates, and the voices of those outside cried that they were friends, and that Lorenzo must come out before the enemy got the upper hand. Upon this a youth named Sigismondo della Stufa, who from babyhood had been devoted to Lorenzo, clambered into the organ gallery which overlooks the church, thence he saw Giuliano lying dead, and recognised that those who beat upon the doors were truly friends. So he ordered those within the Sacristy to open, and they gathered round Lorenzo and took him home that he should not see his brother's corpse.

Meanwhile another tragedy had been enacted. Archbishop Salviati on leaving the Cathedral rode down the short street which separates its square from that of the Palazzo Pubblico. When he reached the palace he asked leave to speak to the Gonfalonier in private. A part of his followers, who were some thirty in all, remained below to secure the outer door, others followed him upstairs and waited in the Secretary's office. The Priors were at dinner, but the Gonfalonier, Cesare Petrucci, came out to see the visitor in an anteroom. This magistrate was the hero of the eventful day. He was one of those men of straw whom the Medici had raised; he had nearly lost his life in the paltry affair at Prato, and thus had learnt to be suspicious. The Archbishop, as he talked, changed colour, and stuttered, his sentences had no construction, he would clear his throat, and look uneasily towards the door. This was, no doubt, the moment when his comrades from the Secretary's office were meant

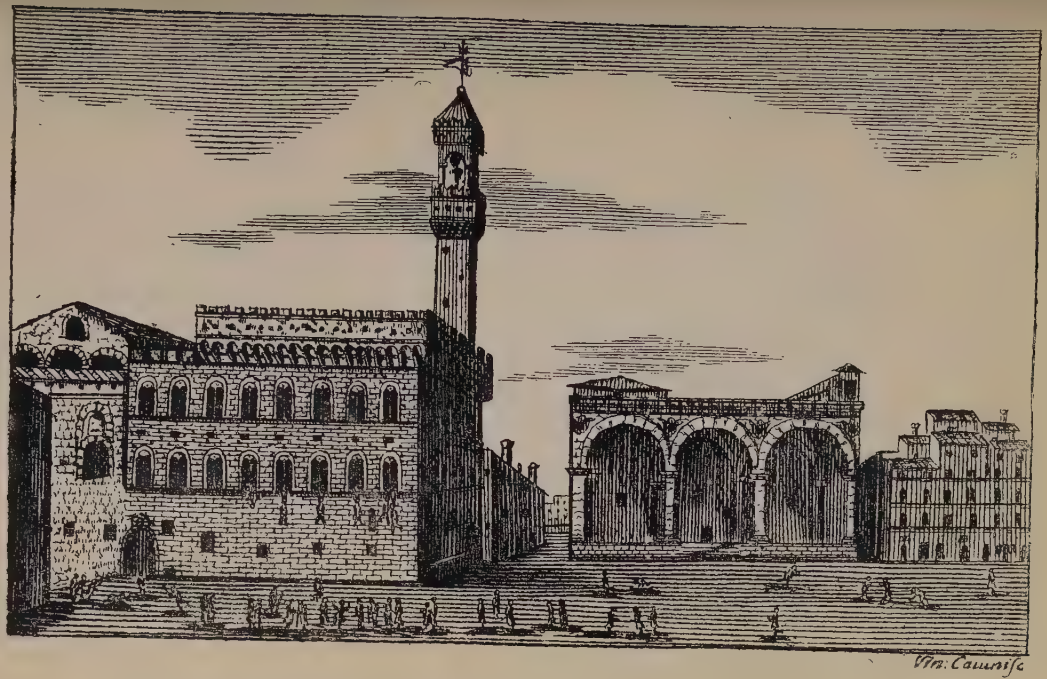
to rush upon the Priors. But these bravos were caught in their own trap, they had closed the door behind them; Petrucci had given it a new spring bolt, which could only be opened from outside. The Gonfalonier suspecting mischief called suddenly for the guard. The Archbishop turned and fled. Petrucci rushing after him dashed into Bracciolini, and twisting his hand in his hair threw him to the ground. The Priors with their handful of attendants then drew the chain across the staircase of the great tower, and here headed by Petrucci, who wielded a spit which he had snatched up from the kitchen, they kept at bay the Perugian soldiers who now ascended from the court. The great bell of the Palazzo clanged, the people poured into the square, and besieged the gate which the Archbishop's men had shut.

Then it was that Jacopo Pazzi mounted horse and with a hundred followers rode through the crowd to the Palace, crying "People and liberty." The people answered with curses and cries of "Palle, palle,"* while the Priors and their servants hurled from the battlements the stones which from time immemorial were stored there for such a purpose. Jacopo turned to his home, and collecting his retainers rode through the Porta Santa Croce and made for the Mugello. The people stormed the gate of the Palace, some of the strangers were cut down in the square, others were taken from their trap and hurled from the windows on the pavement. Francesco Pazzi was found

* The "palle" were the balls on the Medici coat-of-arms.

writhing naked on his bed with his wounded leg, and was brought to the Palace. Petrucci, having now heard of Giuliano's murder, hung him from the mullion of the window. Then by his side they threw out to hang Archbishop Salviati, who, twisting towards the Pazzi, bit him on the breast, and clutched with his teeth the rope that galled his throat. Two other Salviati shared his fate. Meanwhile the crowd gathered before the palace of the Medici, and above them waved a spit with the head and forequarter of one of the victims of the square. Here again they shouted "Palle, palle," and would not leave until Lorenzo with his bandaged neck appeared at the window and sent them home. The Cardinal Riario was with the greatest difficulty escorted through the raging crowd, and brought safe to the Palace. It was said that he never regained his colour till his dying day, and that his hand would nervously clutch as though at a rope around his neck. Yet every one has his own form of courage, and Rafaello at the gaming-table was hereafter noted for his spirit.

It was long since Florence had seen such a day of blood, but vengeance was not exhausted. Two days after the tragedy Jacopo Pazzi, who had nearly gained the frontier, was brought in. He offered the young peasant who first took him seven golden crowns if he would kill him, but a blow was the only answer. Before hanging he was put to torture. He confessed that it was the scandal of the inheritance that had driven him to revolt, and that, old gambler as he was, he had trusted to the luck of



PALAZZO PUBBLICO.

With the Pazzi conspirators hanging from the windows. From a woodcut in Politian's *Conjurationis Pactianæ Commentarium*, edited by J. Adimari, 1769.

Franceschino. "And why," asked the thoroughgoing Medicean, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, "were you not deterred by the superlative fortune of Lorenzo?" When near to death, Politian writes, he cried in agony that he gave his soul to the devil. The innocent Renato was dragged from his villa, and hung by his naked brother clad in his disguise, a peasant's grey smock, "as though to make a masquerade." Renato alone found pity with the crowd; it was to his prejudice perhaps that he was held to be clever and popular; it was to the interest of the ruling party to remove him from their path. Not until the third of May were the two priests taken who had attacked Lorenzo. They were found hidden in the Badia, which the people would gladly have burnt, for its hospitality. They sliced off the ears and noses of their captives, and then handed them over to justice to be hung. The soldier Montesecco was put to the torture and wrote a full confession, our chief authority for the development of the plot. This saved him from hanging, and he alone met a soldier's death by the sword in the court of the present Bargello. From seventy to one hundred men, some of them innocent friends and attendants, who knew nothing of the plot, were killed. The walls of the palaces of the Signoria and the Podestà were lined with hanging corpses, among them Girolamo Riario's crossbowmen with his device upon their stockings. As the victims fell upon the pavement the wild soldiers from the hills fought for their stockings and their jerkins. Only three are known to have escaped. Of these Baroncelli a year afterwards was

extradited by the Porte, and straightway hung in the blue Turkish dress in which he had arrived. An unknown attendant was discovered hiding under a stack of wood in the palace of the Signoria. He was let off with his fright and his four days of fasting. Napoleone Franzesi got clear away by the aid of Piero Vespucci, who expiated his offence by two years in the common gaol. Vespucci richly deserved hanging. Disinherited and ruined, hoping for revolution, he had, on seeing Giuliano dead, shouted for the Pazzi. Then, noting the fury of the people, he led the rabble to burn the Pazzi palaces, and was only beaten back by young Piero Corsini who protected the property, and carried Francesco through the raging mob to the judgment of the Signoria.

In Florence the family was regarded as a unit; the innocent members of the Pazzi must suffer for the guilty. Several were sent to the dungeons of Volterra. The whole house was disqualified from office, the survivors were ordered to change the family name. Citizens were forbidden to marry a daughter or sister of the condemned. Orders were given that the scutcheons should be hacked from the walls, that the name of the little square where the Pazzi palaces clustered should be changed. It was in vain that the ancestor of the house with his horse's hoofs shod backwards had carried the sacred fire from Jerusalem to his native city. The car which contained the flame which on Easter eve the dove bore to the altar of Santa Reparata must no longer bear the accursed name. Yet streets will not always change their

name at the beck of a Local Board ; the dolphins of the Pazzi may still be seen capering above the doorways, and in the Cathedral, and on the square without, every one on Easter eve may read for two *soldi* the story of the Pazzi car.

Lorenzo's brother-in-law, Guglielmo, laboured under some suspicion. It was thought that he was "sitting on two chairs," hoping that if the Medici were supplanted by the Pazzi, the husband of a Medici might make the transition easier. For such suspicion there was little ground, but it is small wonder if the nerves of the ruling party were unhinged. For his wife's sake Guglielmo was lightly punished ; he was confined to bounds, he must remain within a radius of over five and under twenty miles from Florence. Even this penalty was soon removed.

It was long before excitement was allayed. The Eight vainly strove to clear the streets of the improvised foot soldiers who had poured in from every country town. Some were taken into the republic's pay, and with these the Bargello paraded the city night and day. All night through a burgher guard was under arms. Private citizens were ordered to walk abroad unarmed, but none, neither small nor great, would after sundown venture from his door. The people had its compensations. Even those who could not buy could enjoy the sale by auction in the public street of Jacopo Pazzi's stud, while the display of household goods which filled the portico of the mint from end to end untied the tightest purse-string. But second-hand dealers were numerous in Florence even then, and amateur *conoscenti* or thrifty

housewives doubtless had the lesser chance. All however could see for nothing the ingenious Botticelli painting the figures of the rebels on the wall of the Palazzo Pubblico, and laugh at the runaway Napoleone who was represented as hanging by one leg.

One horrible tale must perhaps be told to complete the tragedy, for it marks the contrast between the brutalities and refinements of Renaissance life. Jacopo Pazzi was buried in the beautiful chapel of his house at Santa Croce. But day after day the rain fell upon the tender corn. The peasants feared that it was God's anger because a blasphemer had been buried in hallowed ground. The standard of language in Tuscany was at least higher than in our modern streets and villages. Thus the people took Jacopo from his tomb and buried him in a garden near the wall. The street urchins were not satisfied; they were a power in Florence; it was not Savonarola who first made them the arbiters of morals. They dragged the corpse from its grave more than a fortnight after death; they drew it with the cord around his neck through the streets of Florence, crying: "Room for the great knight." Then tying the cord to the bell of the victim's house they called: "Open, your master knocks." Driven from the *Piazza* by the police they dragged the body to the Arno and threw it in. There it floated down the river with face upturned, while crowds of sight-seers hurried to the bridges to see it pass. Below Florence, at Brozzi, the boys pulled it again to shore, hung it on a willow and flogged it, then threw it in once

more, and the body of the blaspheming gambler cleared the bridge at Pisa and floated to the sea. Such is the cruel tale, and a highly moral tale it is.

The Pazzi conspiracy was a useless crime. The plot could have had no success but the murder of two men. It was not the result of a constitutional revolt, it did not spring from any general opposition to the monarchical methods of the Medici. The Florentine conspirators came from within the Medicean circle, from a family closely connected with the ring by marriage. It might from one point of view be regarded as another proof of the Aristotelian maxim that the chief danger to an oligarchy lies within itself. Yet the Pazzi plot by no means resembled the oligarchical opposition which resulted in the expulsion of Lorenzo's son. The leading families of the *popolo grasso*, "the fat bourgeoisie," would never have accepted the lead of the Pazzi. It was an aristocratic house against which they had an inherited dislike. Nor indeed were the nobles ill-disposed towards the Medici. The Cavalcanti had been Lorenzo's courageous protectors in the Church; the Ricasoli were to do yeomen's service in the coming war. The Pazzi wildly hoped that they could raise the people; but the lower classes loved the genial Medici as heartily as they loathed the haughty Pazzi. Not a man, as the sulky republican Rinuccini was forced to confess, had cried "Marzocco" * as Jacopo Pazzi rode to the *Piazza*, but only "Palle, palle."

* The Marzocco was the carved lion, the symbol of Florentine power.

Public opinion revolted against a crime committed at the most sacred moment in the city's most sacred place. For days to come armed peasants flocked into Florence, quite unbidden, to defend the Medici, and offer the simple gifts which should console Lorenzo or win his favour. The citizens followed suit, the Medici palace was the centre of a perpetual throng, which stored it with arms and meat and bread as though to stand a siege.

There remains the assassins' expectation of foreign aid. It is scarcely probable that Florence, even unarmed as she was, would have surrendered to two thousand men from Imola and Città di Castello. The peasants of the uplands coped successfully before and since with far superior forces. Lorenzo's close ally, Giovanni Bentivoglio of Bologna, was in the Mugello with horse and foot before Girolamo Riario's condottieri could march to Florence.

Murderers, has said a modern statesman who has an influential following in a respectable assembly, are not to be reckoned among the criminal classes. Political assassination is sometimes held to have its moral side. It is rather a disease, the germ of which is hard to trace, and its laws difficult to ascertain, but which under certain conditions becomes epidemic. It has often been remarked that such an epidemic was passing through Italy in the latter half of the fifteenth century, though it must be confessed that the Italian has the reputation of being at all ages too ready with the knife. The murder of Giuliano has been closely connected with that of Girolamo Riario which followed, and that of

the Sforza, which preceded it. With regard to the latter there is this much to be said, that Cola Montano was intimate with Girolamo, that he had lately been in Rome, that in 1478 he issued in Lucca a violent philippic against Lorenzo. He shared, moreover, the fate of the conspirators, for in 1482 he was hung by the neck for a murderous scoundrel, as he was. In the Milanese plot, however, two of the assassins had motives not ungenerous; in that of the Pazzi the motives were of the meanest. There was no genuine detestation of tyranny, not even a morbid imagination craving after classicism. The determining causes were greed of further gain, jealousy, revenge for petty losses, and paltry deprivations, bearing out the truth of Machiavelli's maxim that in material Italy a despot may more safely deprive men of their lives than of their money. The conspiracy can scarcely be called Florentine; only six or seven Florentines were engaged in it. The head of the Florentine branch of the Pazzi had long resisted; it was at Rome that the plot was hatched.

Yet these assassinations found some sympathy among those who would take no personal part in violence. Rinuccini had applauded the murder of Sforza as a manly action worthy of all praise, deserving to be imitated by all who live under a tyrant or one like a tyrant; it was due only to the cowardice and bad customs of the day that this glorious precedent bore so little fruit. He now spoke of the Pazzi as showing the noble spirit of the true citizen, of their enterprise as being just, and well calculated

to free their country. The times are out of joint when sober citizens can write up their private diaries in such terms as these.

The conspiracy nearly cost Lorenzo his life, but it made his fortune. Giuliano was killed; with him his brother must have shared the family property, while the government might have become a matter of dispute. The enemies of the Medici were removed by the public act and a brave show of justice. The people had spontaneously taken up arms for Lorenzo, the aristocracy must have marked the enthusiasm of the masses. Henceforth he was master of the government, almost its sovereign lord; the power which up to that day had been great but subject to suspicion was now enormous and secure. "And this," concludes Guicciardini, "is the end of civil discord and sedition; the one party is exterminated, the other becomes lord of the city; supporters and adherents from being comrades became almost subjects; the people is reduced to be its slave; the government descends on the hereditary principle, and many a time from a wise man devolves upon a fool, who then gives the last push to the sinking state."

On Ascension Day Giuliano had a public funeral in San Lorenzo. There was no hypocrisy in the people's grief. He was the darling of high and low, the most attractive of all the Medici. His passion was the chase; he was a bold rider, a skilful jouster, eminent in jumping and in wrestling. Yet he was no "brutal athlete." He loved pictures, music, and everything that was pretty, he loved poetry that told

GIULIANO DE' MEDICI.

Portrait by Sandro Botticelli in the gallery at Bergamo.

(*From a photograph by Marcozzi.*)

of love, he composed verses in his mother-tongue, full of weight and sentiment. He talked brightly and thought soundly, delighted in witty and playful company, but hated above all men those who lied or bore a grudge for wrongs. Faithful and high-minded, regardful of religious forms and moral decencies, he was ever ready to render service, or perform a courteous act. In his relations to his brother, whom he worshipped, there was no sign of jealousy. The city long missed the well-known figure, tall and well proportioned, set on wide hips and sturdy legs, the harsh, olive-tinted features lightened by bright black eyes, the long lock on the forehead, and the shock of black hair thrust back upon the neck. Giuliano died unmarried, but Lorenzo shortly afterwards heard of the existence of a child by a girl of lower rank, either posthumous or born immediately before the father's death. This child was taken into the Medici household, thence to pass to the Papal throne under the title of Clement VII.

Salviati.

Pazzi.

Niccolò Orsini, and reverse.

CHAPTER V.

War with the Papacy and Naples—Character of Italian soldiery —Lorenzo's visit to Naples—The Turks take Otranto.

1478–1480.

AT Rome the news of the issue of the Pazzi plot caused a great sensation. The Pope wrote later, and perhaps with truth, that he had regretted the occurrence. Girolamo Riario, however, and the King of Naples blew upon the flames. Priests had been massacred, an archbishop shamefully hung, a cardinal, the Pope's nephew to boot, was still in prison. Girolamo, with three hundred pikes, visited Donato Acciaiuoli, the veteran ambassador of Florence, and carried him from his residence by force. The old man did not lose his presence of mind; he insisted on being taken to the Pope, and there spoke his mind so roundly on this outrage, that Sixtus rebuked his nephew, and was forced to let him go. The Vene-

tian and Milanese ambassadors, indeed, declared in no uncertain terms that, if their fellow envoy were sent to the Castle of Sant' Angelo, they would share his prison.* In Naples and Rome, Florentine merchants were arrested, though at Rome they were again released for fear of mischief to the imprisoned cardinal. The situation was perplexing. The political idea of the conspiracy had been to overthrow the Medici, and then to draw Florence away from the Venetian connection into the Papal-Neapolitan combination. The plot had, however, only served to identify the city more completely with the Medici. This difficulty the Pope tried to meet. He affected that he had no quarrel with the Florentines, but with the son of iniquity and child of perdition, Lorenzo de' Medici, and those officials who had aided and abetted him. It was against him therefore in person, and his associates in guilt, that the brief of excommunication was launched. The city was invited to regain the Papal favour by surrendering the offenders; in case of refusal the dioceses of Florence, Pisa, and Pistoia must be placed under an interdict.

Guelfic as were the Florentines by tradition, they were a spirited people, always ready to resent Papal interference in their domestic policy. The Pope's pretensions, moreover, were too ridiculous. Lorenzo's

* The veteran diplomatist owed his death to the excitement of these days. Appointed ambassador to France he died before he could execute his commission. The Florentines showed none of the ingratitude which is attributed to republics. Donato had a splendid public funeral, his daughters were dowered, his sons freed from taxes.

sole fault had been, as he plaintively expressed it in a letter to the King of France, that he had not been murdered. The representative of the State had hung the Archbishop and imprisoned the Cardinal without reference to Lorenzo. Rafaello Riario was set free, as Acciaiuoli and the Venetians earnestly advised, but the resolution of the city was not shaken. In answer to the Pope's indictment the Chancellor sent to Italian and European powers the reply of the republic, to which was attached the Confession of Montesecco. A synod of Florentine theologians, formal or informal, decided that the Interdict was of no effect, and called upon the clergy to perform the sacraments.* Florence was not without allies. Venice and Milan were pledged to her defence. High hopes were placed upon the King of France. Louis XI. wrote immediately to condole with Lorenzo on his brother's death, and to congratulate him on his own escape. Philippe de Comines was sent in all haste to Florence, and as an earnest of a close alliance, he effected a reconciliation between the regent of Milan and his government, investing the young Duke with Genoa as a fief of France. The King threatened Sixtus with a General Council, and summoned a synod of French clergy, which forbade the transference of money from France to Rome. Even the sanguine Lorenzo, however, was soon forced to realise that his professed friend

* It is a debated point whether this audacious document was the product of a synod, of the proceedings of which no evidence exists, or of individual theologians. It has been attributed to Gentile Becchi.

was playing a waiting, if not a double, game, and that the Ultramontane alliance might give him reputation, but little aid.

Both sides had had much to say, and said it at quite unnecessary length. The Pope had used the old formulæ, admirably pigeon-holed at the Vatican. But the formulæ were inapplicable to the offence. The Pope, acting probably under the influence of Girolamo, displayed little of the traditional wisdom of the Curia; the laugh was on Lorenzo's side. Bartolommeo Scala was, as a stylist, below the average of Florentine chancellors, but he had a good case. He relied chiefly on Montesecco's Confession, which was believed then, as it still is. Diplomatists and publicists had not exhausted their resources when the enemy was on the Tuscan frontier. Alfonso of Naples sent his trumpet to Florence with an ultimatum; if the city would come to her senses and expel Lorenzo, she should be received back into the favour of the Church. Lorenzo showed all his tact. Naturally a man of pleasure, it required a crisis to show him at his best. He thought it not enough that the constitutional authorities of the republic should send their formal answer to the challenge, unanimous as it was sure to be. He would make his cause more popular, commit to it the private judgment of his fellow citizens. For this reason he had summoned to the Palace of the Signoria a general meeting of all important citizens; and to them he made a speech. He declined to discuss the past, to excuse himself or to accuse others; upon this matter the State had pronounced

its verdict; he only wished that its cruel memories might be forgotten: it grieved him to the bottom of the heart that the vicar of Christ, in times of such peril to all Christ's servants, should descend to persecute a private individual, to wage war against a state to which the Church had owed so much: within himself two sentiments were struggling for the mastery—his gratitude for the steadfastness with which his country had protected him, his grief that by another's guilt he was the cause of trouble to the city, which he loved more than life: for him it was enough that his conscience had no sting of remorse; for his city he hoped that the aid of God and the prudence of her citizens would easily and shortly deliver her from present toils: if, however, the city thought that his own death or exile would serve the public safety, he offered his life, his property, the blood of his children, freely and frankly to his country.

To such a speech as this the answer was but one. Lorenzo was bidden to take heart, for it was his bounden duty to live and die with his republic. To prove that Florence took due care of so dear and true a citizen, a guard of twelve outriders was appointed to guard his person. In this simple measure of police protection historians have seen the climax of Lorenzo's despotism. How many a modern statesman must have been a tyrant!

In the face of danger the Florentines made a brave show. They levied taxes, especially on the clergy. They kept the populace in good humour by celebrating the *fête* of San Giovanni, which had been post-

poned to July 5th, with all its usual magnificence. The horses raced for the *palio* down the street, mimic buildings rose by magic in the squares, "giants and demons, fireworks, and many other lovely things," graced the well-known holiday. Yet the situation was very anxious. The city, taken by surprise, was utterly unprepared for war. The first raids by the Sienese created such a panic that no one felt safe outside the walls. A few Milanese horse rode through the city to the front, but of allied armies, Venetian or Milanese, there was little or no news. The war must be, at first at all events, defensive, for the Papal-Neapolitan armies were already in force upon the frontier.

There were two main routes by which the enemy might be expected to attack. If they took the eastward of these, they would start from Chiusi, and follow the valley of the Chiana, a tongue of Florentine territory projecting southwards, between the Papal possessions in Umbria, and the Sienese eastern frontier. The valley is some forty miles long, and in its extreme width twenty-five miles broad. On the hills to the east lay the strongly fortified positions of Castel Fiorentino and Cortona, but it was more probable that the enemy would hug the western heights, which are studded with small towns easily defended, such as Montepulciano, Sinalunga, and Monte San Savino. The objection to this route was that it lay distant from the base of operations, the valley was notoriously malarious, while the hills were in Florentine occupation. The advancing troops would be exposed to attack from Cortona on their

right flank, and not impossibly to that of a Venetian and Romagnol force moving across the Apennines, while, if the Florentines could aid Carlo Fortebraccio to revolutionise Perugia, their communications would be endangered. The end of the Chiana valley is blocked by Arezzo, a town too large to take, while masking was not yet in fashion. They could not therefore turn westwards down the Arno valley without leaving this important position in their rear, and from hence to Florence they would be in a hostile territory without supplies, except such as they could plunder. It might, however, be possible by the capture of San Savino to strike the Ambra valley to the west, and so to turn Arezzo and reach the Arno nearer to the capital.

The other alternative was to follow the line of the modern railway from Siena to Florence. By this route the invading army marching north from Siena would strike the valley of the Elsa at Poggibonsi, where the river makes a sharp turn from the west, and then flows northwards to the Arno. Up to this point the Elsa is a rapid, winding river running between steep hills, on one of which is situated the strong town of Colle. Poggibonsi once passed, the valley expands, the rolling hills become lower and more distant, until the river enters the fertile plain of Empoli, the chief granary of Florence, still noted for its early fruit and grain crops. This route had obvious advantages. The Sienese territory would form a base of supply, the march through hostile territory would be shorter, Siena, the weakest member of the alliance, would be protected from Florentine

raids; it might be possible to stir up the embers of revolt in Volterra, but one day's march to the left of the advancing army. Once arrived at Empoli, the invaders would revel in the abundant supplies of which they were depriving Florence. Hence they could march up the Arno by good roads to the capital, little more than a score of miles, or following the stream could fall upon Pisa and Leghorn. They would thus cut the Florentines off from the sea, and open communications with the Neapolitan fleet and the forces which Ludovico Sforza and his Genoese friends, the Fregosi, had collected in the Lunigiana, north of Pisa. The chief objection to this route was that the Florentine frontier was strongly fortified against the traditional enemy, Siena; the townsmen of Castellina, Poggibonsi, Colle, and San Gemignano were likely to make stout resistance, or to endanger the communications of any army that ventured to leave them in its rear.

The Duke of Calabria and the Duke of Urbino originally chose the Chiana valley route. On July 11th they crossed the Florentine frontier beneath Montepulciano. The Florentine forces, only one-third of their number and commanded by no general of note, retreated slowly on Arezzo. The Neapolitans, meanwhile, instead of pursuing, wheeled suddenly to their left front and struck across the hills towards the Elsa, taking Castellina and Radda, two important townships in the wine district of the Chianti, while their cavalry raided to the left and right beyond the Elsa and into the Arno valley. The Florentine commissioners, however, Jacopo and Luigi

Guicciardini, the latter of whom had seen active service under Sigismondo Malatesta, with no little skill checked further advance by concentrating defence in a fortified camp at Poggio Imperiale. This is a lofty plateau, a well-known stronghold of old imperial days, overhanging the Elsa in face of the town of Poggibonsi, which climbs up the opposite hill. Hence the Florentines could command the valley, and execute reprisals by plundering the territory of Siena. Their troops, though without much unity of command, were handled by smart officers of second rank, who made great names hereafter. With the Milanese contingent was Gian Jacopo Trivulzio, the future Marshal of France, with the Venetian Galeotto Pico, Lord of Mirandola, while Niccolò Orsini, Count of Pitigliano, in Florentine service learnt the art of defensive warfare, which was to be of much avail to him in the war of Cambray. Here too the Florentines were rapidly reinforced. The Marquis of Saluzzo brought up his Alpine infantry, which had been landed at Pisa, while Ercole d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, condescended to take the command in chief. For this, however, the propitious hour had not yet arrived, and while the Neapolitans were picking up posts in the Chianti, the Duke awaited the astrologer's command. Half-past ten on September 27th was the far from fateful hour which the Ten of War insisted must on no account be anticipated, and at this moment Lorenzo de' Medici, who had arrived in camp, handed the *bâton* of command to the most incompetent of generals.

The Neapolitans, disliking the escarpments and

entrenchments of Poggio Imperiale, now countermarched to the Chiana valley, and laid siege to San Savino. This town is the military capital of the district, for it commands at once the Chiana and the Ambra to the east and west, and the Arno to the north. The Florentines sent peremptory messages to Ercole d'Este to relieve it at all costs. The Duke, however, would not be hurried, he preferred to fortify himself at a safe distance from the enemy, he even granted a short truce which was the ruin of the town. When at last he was forced to move, the town surrendered. The people were devotedly attached to Florence, but some of the nobles thought their interests better served by independence. The road was now open to the Arno, but November had come, and as usual the combatants retired into winter quarters.

The first campaign had ended not so entirely to the disadvantage of the Florentines as their original inferiority of numbers rendered probable. The main campaign, however, had less influence upon the fortunes of the war than the diversion. The Florentines were to pay the costs of the Duke of Milan's murder. Ferrante, failing to detach the Duchess from the Florentine alliance, resolved to keep her employed at home. He reconciled the factions of the Adorni and Fregosi, which for generations divided Genoa, and aided Ludovico Fregoso, the exiled doge, to reinstate himself. The Sforza brothers, with their cousin Ruberto San Severino, supported the rebellion, and the latter inflicted a crushing defeat on the Milanese troops. This rebel-

lion had at once entailed the withdrawal of a large part of the Lombard contingent from the front. The Duchess and her adviser, Simonetta, acted with much prudence; it was hopeless to recover Genoa; all that they could do was to neutralise the danger. The Castelletto, the great fortress at the upper apex of the town, was still held by the Milanese. This the Duchess surrendered to Battista Fregoso, who expelled Prospero Adorno and Ludovico Fregoso, and preserved neutrality. But the danger to Milan and to Florence was in the coming year to be much increased, and meanwhile the King of Naples, with his roving satellites, the Sforza and the Fregosi, had complete command of the coasts of the Tuscan Gulf. It seemed not unlikely that Florence might be cut off from the sea. Within her territory, at Pistoia, a plot fostered by Alfonso was discovered. At Lucca, Piero Capponi, hereafter to be famous, well-nigh lost his life in a popular tumult directed against Florence. The impudent little republic would probably have declared war, but for the timely threats of a French ambassador. Lucchese merchandise in France was a hostage for good conduct, and commercial prudence overmastered martial spite.

It was felt at Florence that another campaign could not be supported under present conditions. The plague was prevalent throughout the autumn, seven or eight persons dying daily. There was no sense of security outside the walls. Men were hung for plundering immediately beyond the Porta San Niccolò; they had pretended to be a raiding party of the enemy. Between war, and plague, and in-

terdict, there was a panic in the town, a panic which took the form of languor. Few would work, and those who would could find no work to do. In the wool and silk factories the masters were locking out. "Both head and limbs," wrote Landucci, "are in sorry plight, God help us." A fanatic, who had nursed lepers in the Volterrano, came to Florence to prophesy disaster. He was but a youth, and lean, with no baggage but the bag upon his back; yet St. John and Raphael had paid him visits, and he leapt upon the Signoria's platform and began to preach. The Eight, with sound good sense, sent him about his business; but he was only one of many.

It was under such dismal circumstances that two of the ablest Florentine diplomatists, Tommaso Soderini and Girolamo Morelli, were sent respectively to Venice and Milan to urge that, if more active aid were not accorded, Florence must make peace. Soderini pressed the Venetians to take the offensive against Imola; this would either withdraw the Duke of Urbino from the Chiana, or at least Imola must fall to the superior force of Venice and the Romagnol lords. The Senate, however, was unwilling to draw the war to a quarter where their own interests were concerned. There were schemes that a Venetian fleet should attack the Neapolitan coast, and that the allies should invite King René or his grandson into Italy. It was finally decided that the Milanese should send Ridolfo Gonzaga, brother of the Marquis of Mantua, in aid of the Duke of Ferrara to protect the Elsa valley, while the Venetian condottiere, Ruberto Malatesta, should help Carlo Fortebraccio

to raise disturbance in Perugia, and act upon the right flank and rear of the Papal-Neapolitan forces.

This latter scheme was promising, for both officers were capable generals. Unfortunately, however, Fortebraccio died at the moment of carrying it into execution. Nevertheless, his son and Malatesta routed the Pope's nephew, the Prefect of Rome, by the shores of Trasimene, and ravaged the country to the walls of Perugia. A part of the Neapolitan forces were drawn off to check Malatesta's advance, which enabled the Florentine army at Poggio Imperiale to storm the Sienese town of Casole. This success led to their ultimate defeat. A quarrel over the booty between the Mantuan and Ferrarese troops more than compensated for so trifling a triumph. It became necessary to separate the two divisions. Gonzaga was despatched to reinforce Malatesta, while Constanzo Sforza, Lord of Pesara, who could not serve with Malatesta, aided Sigismondo d'Este to hold the Elsa valley. The Duke had already been called northwards to protect the Milanese and Florentine frontiers from Ludovico Sforza.

The Neapolitans skilfully took advantage of the weakening of the Florentines in the Elsa valley. Calling in their detached forces with great secresy and rapidity, they crossed the bridge of Chiusi, marched up the Arbia towards Siena, and then before break of day stormed the entrenched camp on Poggio Imperiale. It was really a smart action, which redeemed the dragging indecisive languor of these campaigns. The Florentines, trusting in their

momentary superiority in the Elsa valley, had become careless in their outpost service; there was next to no defence; the loss of men was considerable, and several of their condottieri were taken. Costanzo Sforza alone won some distinction. Pursued by Jacopo d'Appiano, Lord of Piombino, he turned upon him and took him prisoner. He saved, moreover, the great Florentine standard, and rallied the broken forces at Casciano. In the Town-hall of Siena a great fresco of this battle may still be seen. The Dukes of Calabria and Urbino are charging the Florentines home, and driving them into Poggibonsi. Costanzo Sforza is in full flight, while along the ridge run the light armed infantry, making for the Florentine tents, conspicuous in the midst of which is Sforza's.

There was now no organised force between the enemy and Florence except the demoralised remnants of the defeated army. Eight miles march along the high-road would have taken the Neapolitans to Casciano, and eight more to the capital. Had Alfonso advanced he must have won another victory before Malatesta could retire from the Chiana. But such a march was far too spirited for Italian strategy in the fifteenth century. Alfonso contented himself with securing the posts on the Upper Elsa, and finally sat down before Colle. This little town, perched on a steep broken hill between two gorges, perhaps saved Florence and the Medici. The suburb, with its factories on the stream, has now supplanted the old town on the hill, and the men of Colle are as prominent in the labour war as they

once were in the defence of their Florentine masters. In the town was one Carlino, a Venetian captain, who organised the defence, and found enthusiastic support from men and women. Again and again Papal and Neapolitan attacks broke themselves against the walls, while a Florentine force at San Gemignano ventured to beat up their quarters. Colle fell, indeed, in November after a two months' siege, but its defence had upset the calculations of the campaign. Alfonso's troops were demoralised by their losses, Federigo of Urbino was invalided, supplies were falling short, and political considerations were becoming prominent. The Duke of Calabria offered a three months' truce, and his troops retired to their winter quarters.

It was at this time that panic spread in another district. In the Mugello at midnight in November church bells were set tolling the alarm, and the whole countryside was upside down, to use Landucci's phrase. Riario's troops had advanced from Imola, and were thought to be on their march across the mountains. Florentine families who had fled to the highlands from the plague, now yearned for the unsanitary safety of the capital. The enemy, however, was contented with the capture of Piancaldoli in Florentine Romagna; its recovery was to result from yet another murder.

Once again the military operations at the seat of war had been eclipsed in importance by events in North Italy. Sixtus IV., a keen-sighted pioneer in all that concerned the temporal fortunes of the Papacy, utilised the propensities of the Swiss moun-

taineers towards piety and plunder. It was from his uncle that the great Julius learnt to employ the Swiss as the standing army of the Curia. At the Pope's persuasion the men of Uri broke their treaty with the Duke of Milan, poured over the St. Gothard, seized Bellinzona, ravaged the Leventina valley, and threatened to march upon the capital. Yet more troublesome were San Severino and the Sforza brothers. In February, 1479, they had appeared before Pisa, and might have taken the town but for the arrival of the Duke of Ferrara with troops drawn from the Elsa. In August the Duke had to defend the Parmesan from Ludovico, who was attempting to reach the Æmilian road by the valley of the Taro. Fearing to be entrapped among the mountains, the two Sforza retraced their steps to the Lunigiana, and here the elder brother died. San Severino and Ludovico, full of resource, crossed the difficult mountain pass of the Cento Croci, and suddenly seized Tortona in the valley of the Po. Their professed motive was the release of the young Duke from the tutelage of his mother and Simonetta, and it became clear that no reliance could be placed on the Milanese mercenaries. In a luckless moment the Duchess was reconciled to Ludovico, who entered Milan in triumph on the day of the Florentine defeat at Poggio Imperiale. The Duchess was removed from the government. Simonetta, who had been the stoutest advocate of the Florentine alliance, was hurried off to prison at Pavia. Even if Ludovico were not the open enemy of the allies, it was improbable that he would render active aid against his

Neapolitan benefactors. Thus in the North as in the South, the campaign of 1479 closed with disaster to the fortunes of Lorenzo.

Modern historians have accused Lorenzo of cowardice for not taking a personal part in the campaigns which were fought in his behalf. Such criticism reflects rather on the sense of its authors than on the courage of Lorenzo. The absence of official position which allowed the Medici to be all-powerful at home was a bar to their presence at the front. The army engaged consisted not only of Florentines but of allies, whose commanders were of rank far higher than his own. He was, indeed, one of the Ten of War, but it was unlikely that he should be appointed Commissary with the army, a post entrusted to men of wider experience, or who had received some military education. Without a soldier's tastes or training Lorenzo could have been of no conceivable service at the front. The interference of a private individual in an anomalous position would have added to the difficulties of the commanders, who resented even the officious intervention of the Ten. The Florentine army in this war was purely mercenary, the soldiers were engaged by condottieri, there was no place for volunteers. Lorenzo's presence could scarcely have inspired with enthusiasm such professional hacks as Ruberto Malatesta or Costanzo Sforza and their men. At Naples royalism was closely bound up with the military system, but authority at Florence, whether official or unofficial, had slight personal contact with the army. The royal families of Russia, Germany, or Italy would be sub-

ject to remark if a campaign were fought without any of their members present; it is not however incumbent on the President of the French Republic, or of the United States, or on the British Premier to lead or follow armies.

It required after all no great courage to face a fifteenth century campaign. A good seat, a swift horse, and a long purse were the surest amulets against personal risk. No single captain of even secondary rank was killed in the two years of this war. Lorenzo's place was in Florence, his absence would not only have endangered his own position, but the peace of the State. His duty, and this was no slight task, was to direct the diplomatic operations which ultimately decided more than arms. He kept from flagging the spirits of the citizens; he provided, not perhaps too wisely, for the financial necessities of the war. Nor was his personal action entirely without influence on its fortunes. To him was due the happy proposition to give the citizenship of Florence to the Priors of Colle, a compliment which did much to stimulate the townsmen to their notable defence. Citizenship was, moreover, bestowed on the disfranchised house of Ricasoli, whose possessions lay along the Sienese frontier and who had bravely headed the resistance offered by the walled villages of the Chianti. Courage is cast in different moulds, and that of the soldier is not necessarily of the finest type. Lorenzo must be classed with Orange, also accused of shirking action, rather than with Navarre; with Lincoln rather than with Lee. Courage it must have needed to stay alone in

Florence, with wife, family, and friends away on the healthful hills, with plague raging in the capital, with the possibility of assassination at every street corner and in every church, with the probability of disaffection and revolt, and the certainty of criticism and discontent.

With the truce of November, 1479, the war was really over. The five great powers of Italy had been engaged, and on one side or the other had gathered the chief of the second-rate powers, Mantua, Ferrara, Siena, Genoa, Montferrat, Saluzzo. The supply of mercenaries had now passed from the hands of roving professional adventurers into those of the smaller Italian princes. Their own states formed a nucleus for their forces, they found lucrative employment for their subjects, while they supported their expensive courts with the proceeds of the *condotta*. Thus all the lordlings from sea to sea brought their contingents to the fray, Bentivoglio of Bologna, Manfredi of Faenza, Ordelaffi of Forlì, Malatesta of Rimini, Sforza of Pesaro, Appiani of Piombino, Malaspina from the Lunigiana, Orsini from the Patrimony of St. Peter. The rival families of Perugia and Città di Castello seized the opportunity to renew their faction fights. The most distinguished of the older school of generals, Federigo of Urbino, Ruberto Malatesta, Virginio Orsini, were engaged, together with those who were to make names in future, Gian Jacopo and Teodoro Trivulzio, Niccolò Orsini, Count of Pitigliano. Yet the results were small, as were always those of these Italian wars.

This deficiency of result was due in some measure

to the character of the ground. The scene of action lay in rough, broken country intersected by deep water-courses. The only open ground, the Chiana valley, was then a swamp. The barren marly hills around Siena could not supply the Papal-Neapolitan forces; long trains of mules had to wind through the mountains from Viterbo. The condottieri encouraged the cavalry arm, because this is expensive to support, and takes long to train; it cannot be improvised, and thus they retained a monopoly in the supply of troops. The country, however, was ill-fitted for cavalry, while the infantry was worth but little. The foot soldiers were, indeed, more picturesque than martial with their bright jerkins and their parti-coloured tights. Their arms were but a light lance, a cross-bow, or a small halberd which they used as a missile, an iron cap, and perhaps a shield. In the open field they were scarcely used, though they were serviceable in defending towns against surprise, in driving cattle, burning mills, and attacking convoys. They are graphically described by Nardi as marching at a trot, crying out the name of the prince who paid them, or gaily dancing behind a drum and fife, more like a troop of mountebanks than soldiers. Italian artillery was, as yet, deficient in precision and rapidity of fire, and the carriages were even inferior to the guns. Yet the forces engaged were probably not so despicable as later writers would lead their readers to believe. Machiavelli wrote after the event, when the Italians, in great measure from want of artillery, had been thoroughly beaten. He was, morever, writing with an object, and would always

exaggerate to prove his point. Trivulzio, indeed, criticises the want of discipline and military science in the Florentine troops. They had, he wrote, no commissariat, no engineers, scarcely one hundred and fifty foot were properly equipped, some companies were intermixed, others had lost their intervals by half a mile. There was at Florence no military gentry as at Milan and Naples, and no well organised condottiere system as at Venice. The fact of Trivulzio's criticism would seem to show that he regarded these troops as below the standard to which he was accustomed. The Florentine commissaries were loud in their praise of the discipline and equipment of the Lombards.

Comines in the course of his embassy visited both camps. His authority is most important, and as a military critic he was usually severe, as may be judged by his strictures on the French and Burgundian forces at Montlhéri. He remarked that the Italians were slower in taking fortified positions than the French, and not so skilful in their defence. This was natural enough, for the extraordinary excellence of French artillery had brought as a sequel a higher level of engineering. In the management of a camp, however, and in the commissariat the French critic thought that his countrymen had much to learn from the Italians. In France, at this time, Italian soldiery was by no means despised. It was not so many years since John of Calabria's Italian cuirassiers had been the best armed and best disciplined troops which fought in the war of the Public Weal. Charles of Burgundy regarded his Lombard cavalry as his

corps d'élite. At this very moment Louis XI. was employing San Severino to levy Italian mercenaries for his Burgundian campaign. Even the Swiss had not engaged the Lombards with unvarying success. It was during the flight of the mountaineers that the baggage mule fell, whose load of bed furniture rattling on the rocks caused an unaccountable panic among the pursuing Milanese.

Nevertheless the mercenary system had its undoubted evils. It was a wasteful, extravagant method of warfare, a system, in fact, of middlemen. The generals protracted wars in order to prolong their pay. In this war they are found going into winter quarters for four months, sparing their men in the attack on fortified places, fighting to take prisoners rather than to kill. A careful general never engaged the enemy if he could help it. The Duke of Ferrara preferred to keep two days' march behind his foe. It took him three weeks to march the fifty miles from Pisa to Sarzana. The Florentines believed that he never wished to win, and when pressed to more rapid movement he scoffed at "those mechanics who know nothing." But the peaceful Florentine grocer, Landucci, knew more than the martial Duke. "The system of our Italian soldiery," he wrote, "is this. You turn your attention to plundering in that direction, and we will do the same in this; getting too near each other is not our game; a village is bombarded several days, and succour is never sent," and then he prophetically concludes, "One day some of those Ultramontanes will have to come to teach you to make war."

There was a curious mixture of mildness and cruelty in this war. When one of Federigo of Urbino's guns hit the houses in the town of Colle, the people cried that it was not fair play. But when faction was concerned cruelty knew no bounds. Niccolò Vitelli burnt men, women, and children in the villages round Castello, and Giustino made reprisals in the land around Arezzo. These, however, said Landucci, were two cruel men, likely to come to no good end, if Scripture told him true.

The friendships and relationships which existed between captains in opposite camps unquestionably prevented them from pushing an advantage home. Thus Ercole d'Este was brother-in-law to Alfonso of Naples, and on this ground the Venetians had sensibly objected to his command. Federigo of Urbino was opposed by his son-in-law and near neighbour Malatesta, Costanzo Sforza necessarily had regard to the changing fortunes of his relative Ludovico; Orsini, Manfredi, and Ordelaffi were to be found in either camp. The jealousies within the allies' army were yet more mischievous than the friendships without. Mantuans and Ferrarese had come to blows, and when Costanzo Sforza was reinforced by Malatesta and the young Braccio da Montone at Casciano, the old feud between the two great schools of soldiery burst out anew. Bracceschi and Sforzeschi fought each other with more savagery than they fought the foe. Add to this the running jealousy between the generals and the commissaries. The latter were needed to act at once as spies and spurs upon the former. Yet they no doubt

at times hampered operations, interfering with a general's schemes, robbing him of his responsibility. Malatesta finally abandoned Florentine service, because he could not brook the ignorant interference of civilians. It was natural that the Neapolitan troops in this war had the better record. They were under the direct command of a prince of the royal house; there could be no jealousy, no disunion, no civil interference, no motive for shirking action. Alfonso was no great captain, his troopers were no paladins, yet for all this the best side won.

Throughout the war ambassadors had been more active than commanders. The conflict was becoming a matter of first-rate European importance. The Turk at any moment might be thrown on Italy from North, East, or South. He was advancing through Hungary; his light horsemen were ravaging the Friuli; the Venetian possessions in the Morea and on the Adriatic were falling one by one; in 1479 Venice was forced to make peace. European, and more especially Italian, warfare seemed suicidal. The first French effort at intervention had effected little for Lorenzo, because Comines could offer him no troops. The Papal legate in France assured his master that he need fear no danger. At the close of 1478, however, an influential embassy of six members was sent to urge Sixtus to consent to peace and to summon a General Council at Lyons. The Pope regarded French intervention in his quarrel with Lorenzo as impertinent, and he summarily rejected the idea of a council as unnecessary. An Imperial embassy was also at this time in Rome, and Sixtus

felt sure of the moral support of Frederick III., who was now falling under the influence of his more energetic son Maximilian. He knew well that the Emperor's refusal would be fatal to a General Council. Yet he consented to nominate a Commission of Cardinals to consider conditions of peace. The demand for Lorenzo's banishment disappeared, but he and the offending magistrates were required personally to undergo a solemn humiliation, to abandon to the Pope's vengeance Niccolò Vitelli, to surrender Borgo San Sepolcro and neighbouring townships, to pay an indemnity to the Pope for the expenses of the war. Such terms were only made to be refused; their acceptance must have entailed Lorenzo's fall. Even these were only extorted under pressure from France and England, and the threats of the ambassadors of the allies that they should withdraw from obedience and appeal to a General Council. Finally, in May, 1479, the Pope promised to submit the question to the arbitration of the Kings of France and England, and, if they could not decide it, to the Emperor and his son. This, however, could not prevent the opening of the campaign.

Louis XI. was genuinely well disposed towards Florence and her chief. Had he been younger and less engaged elsewhere, it is possible that the invasion of Charles VIII. might have been anticipated, and the blame of calling the French to Italy might have rested with Lorenzo. But the French King's attempt to extend his eastern frontiers had led him into unforeseen complications. Maximilian's victory at Guinegate was a blow to his prestige. Thus the

French ambassadors were bribed in vain. The 500 French lances which Louis promised would have turned the fortunes of the war. Lorenzo buoyed up the spirits of the Florentines with this hope; yet he knew himself that they would never come.

Lorenzo was fairly beaten in the field; he was being financially ruined by the war; his political prestige was vanishing both in Florence and in Italy. The Venetians indeed bade him show courage and constancy in defence of his freedom, to imitate his stout-hearted forefathers who had not only gloriously defended, but extended their dominions. But these brave words were of slight service without military and pecuniary aid. Milan was still the nominal ally of Florence, but Ludovico Sforza and Ruberto San Severino were enemies almost undisguised, they were known to be negotiating in accord with Naples, to be beseeching the Pope to mediate in their favour with the Swiss; it was joyfully reported to Sixtus from Milan that Lorenzo's ruin was a matter of a few weeks. The negotiations which had been opened at Rome led to no results. Lorenzo truly declared that he did not ask for vengeance, but that his honour revolted against begging pardon for his brother's murder, and paying indemnity to those who had been its authors. Yet even this he would do for the sake of Florence. His private interests, he wrote, should not imperil the State, it was only fair that, as it had undertaken war in his behalf, the peace should be made at his expense. Lorenzo himself was nervous and overworked; he would beg his correspondent to excuse him if his letters were confused, for he

had written all the morning without tasting food. His misfortunes reached their climax when the plague broke out at Florence. The populace might be induced to believe that God's judgment had fallen on the state which was in arms against his Vicar. It was certain that the commercial standstill which it caused would add to the pressing danger of bankruptcy. For a moment the serious illness of Sixtus had cast a ray of hope, but Lorenzo learnt, as many others before and after him, that a sick Pope never dies.

It was under these doleful circumstances that Lorenzo arrived at the resolution which made his fame among the statesmen of the fifteenth century. He determined to throw himself upon the mercy and the good sense of the King of Naples. It was a brave act because Ferrante knew no scruples; he had murdered Piccinino, who came with a safe conduct from his best ally; the death or retention of Lorenzo might not improbably imply the subjection of Tuscany, the traditional ambition of all Kings of Naples, Hohenstauffen, Angevin, or Aragonese. The brave act was generously done. Lorenzo had made the last arrangements for his voyage before his intention was communicated to the citizens; the pretence of the enemy was, he informed them, that war was conducted not against the State but against himself, he would either by giving full personal satisfaction bring peace to Florence and to Italy, or he would prove that the pretence was but a fiction. The meeting of forty principal citizens which was summoned on December 5th to hear the tidings of their

hief's departure expressed its sense of the gravity nd danger of the decision, but in view of the abso- ute necessity of peace, it would not oppose his reso- ution. To the allies the surprise was equally great. The Milanese government expressed polite indigna- ion that Lorenzo had not confided in its well proved ffection, it suggested its not unnatural suspicion hat Ferrante would secure Lorenzo's person, and ave the allies at his discretion. The Florentine mbassador sarcastically replied that Lorenzo had nly acted on advice which had its origin in Milan. Lorenzo's journey was a brave, but not a reckless ct. He counted on his mother wit, on his persua- ive tongue, on the genuine friendships which he had ormed in the Neapolitan royal family, and above ll on the obvious interests of the house. He could rove to Ferrante that Ludovico Moro was an ad- enturer, living from hand to mouth, equally dan- erous as ally or enemy; that Naples could rely on o permanent friendship with the Papacy, whose olicy shifted with the chances of election, but whose nterests were fundamentally opposed to a strong outh Italian Kingdom; was it not likely that the ephews of Sixtus, hungering for principalities, should ook for satisfaction in the land to which the Pope ad so strong a claim? On the other hand, it could e proved that the humiliation of Florence was of ttle service to the King, while its irritation might e of the utmost danger; it was true that the King f France had confined himself to embassies and anifestos, but was it sure that the French royal nterest in the Angevin cause was really dead?

would Louis XI. suffer the most steadfast ally of France to fall unavenged? The French were not the only danger; the chief reproach against the allies was that Venice had made peace with the infidel in order to fight the Pope. A general Italian peace would free the hands of Venice, while continued war might force her to go yet further in her negotiations with the Porte, to point out the tempting and unprotected ports of the Neapolitan Kingdom to the Turkish admirals; Lorenzo's own influence at the Porte had recently been fully proved. Lorenzo was, in fact, but following in the steps of Ferrante's father. The captive Alfonso had proved to his captor, Filippo Maria Visconti, that the interest of one Italian State was that of all.

Nor was Lorenzo's resolve the result of sudden impulse. He had secured the approval of Ferrante. He had apprised the two hostile commanders, the Dukes of Calabria and Urbino, of his intention, expressing the hope that on his return he would find all things in good order. Filippo Strozzi had left for Naples on November 29th to inform the King that Lorenzo was ready to throw himself into his arms, whereon the King was able to reply that he had later news, that Lorenzo was in person coming. Leaving Florence on December 6, 1479, he did not communicate with the Signoria until he had reached Samminiato dei Tedeschi; he excused his previous silence on the ground that the emergency required action rather than speech, it was better that one man's life should be exposed to danger than the whole State should be imperilled. At Vada, a little

port of the Maremma, Lorenzo found the two Neapolitan galleys which Ferrante had sent to await him, and setting sail on December 11th, a week's passage brought him to land at Naples. His reception was encouraging; ships left the harbour to escort him to shore; upon the quay he found his friend, Don Federigo, and Alfonso's young son, Ferrantino. Landing amid a crowd of eager sight-seers, he was taken to a palace immediately opposite the King's residence at Castel Nuovo. For three anxious months Lorenzo remained at Naples, his moods changing rapidly between confidence and despair. He had powerful friends in Federigo, and in the King's chief counsellor, Diomede Carafa, Count of Maddaloni. Above all, the Duchess of Calabria was devoted to his cause, and used all her influence in favour of her brother humanist, her ally, as Ferrante would twittingly call him. Not the least pleasant part of Lorenzo's visit were the strolls with the Duchess on the royal terraces between the Vomero and the sea, on the slopes above the Chiaia, itself Europe's most enchanting public garden. Of this garden she would remind him in the ensuing summer, when it was all in flower, and when the buds of February had become luxuriant foliage.

Apart from his anxieties Naples was a pleasant sojourn to Lorenzo. The town was in its artistic and literary bloom, Tuscan artists, humanists, and bankers had laboured there for generations, and a Florentine could readily feel at home. The coast from Santa Lucia to Baiae and beyond was the scene of merry-making, of luxury, of elegant vice which

recalled the glories of the Roman Empire. Versatile as Lorenzo was, he could enter into the spirit of the people, easy to please as they were ready to tire. He released galley slaves and clad them in green breeches, he dowered poor girls who tramped from the provinces to see him, he gave magnificent banquets to the nobles. Yet he spent many weary hours, waiting, wondering, and writing, while Ferrante was hunting his preserves in the sandy scrub that stretches away northwards from the escarpments of old Cumæ. Alfonso was disinclined to peace, for he believed that Tuscany was at his mercy. The Pope was ceaselessly urging Ferrante to stand firm to his alliance. At least, urged Sixtus, if Florence could not be freed from her tyrant, Lorenzo must come in person to Rome and make, together with the Romagnol lords, his abject submission. For this Roman visit, courageous as he had proved himself, Lorenzo had no inclination. Ferrante assured him that it was not safe to go, and that he would not let him go. The King, wrote Lorenzo, is more anxious for my safety than I myself. The King was right. Lorenzo would hardly have escaped with his life from the brutal and treacherous Girolamo Riario, to whom the doting Pope could not deny even his own honour.

The news from Florence was not always cheering, notwithstanding the expressions of affection from his devoted friends, Bartolommeo Scala and Antonio Pucci. The ambassadors of the allies were a source of constant annoyance in their anxiety for news. The Venetians, naturally indignant at the prospect of a separate alliance, made pretences to withdraw

their troops from Tuscany, and tempted from Florentine service the one capable general, Ruberto Malatesta. The small lords of Romagna were in agony of alarm lest peace should be made at their expense, as was but too likely. Agnolo della Stufa wrote to Lorenzo on behalf of the Ten that the honour of Florence was pledged to these lordlings, and that if they were abandoned her protection would never be sought again; he knew how priests were made; if they were left to the mercies of the Holy Father they would be swept out of existence. It was clear that the Florentines could not accept a beating; they had shown little courage or conduct; they insisted that peace was absolutely essential for purposes of business, and yet they expected all the honours of war; not a stock or stone of their territory must be ceded, not even the smoking ruins of Castellina. Lorenzo had been entrusted with *carte blanche*, and yet he was plied with impossible conditions.

A climax to Lorenzo's trouble was the evil news that the one great Medicean acquisition, Sarzana, had been surprised, during the truce, by two Fregosi brothers, who, as others of their family, were pirates and bandits relying on high protection. It was suspected that they had acted on the Duke of Calabria's orders; at all events he would not force them to restitution. The loss was of sensible importance. If Ludovico Sforza were to be a foe it gave him the key to the Florentine possessions, and if a friend, his only practicable road by which to send his succour was blocked. The difficulty was increased by

the sale of the town to the Genoese Bank of St. George, a corporation more practically powerful than Genoa itself.

The feeling of the people was better than might have been anticipated; it varied, indeed, with every rumour forwarded by Roman or Neapolitan merchants, but there were few open signs of disaffection. Some, indeed, among the upper families, even in the Medicean circle, urged that it was time that the rule of one man should cease, that the caucus system should give place to the rule of the constitutional councils. It was, however, clear, that Lorenzo's return could not be prolonged indefinitely, and that his future position would depend upon the character of the conditions which Ferrante would concede.

At the end of February, in spite of Papal remonstrances, the terms of peace were concluded, and Lorenzo set out on his homeward journey. At Florence he was received with genuine joy. The people had believed that Ferrante would never allow their representative to return. Rinuccini, indeed, writes that joy was soon turned to discontent, that the conditions of the peace were unfavourable, and that there was a general feeling that the worst was concealed from public knowledge. Such murmurs were probably confided only to the diaries of dyspeptic malcontents. Rejoicing was universal when peace was proclaimed on the feast of Annunciation; from the village of Impruneta the sacred figure of the Madonna, ascribed to the skill of St. Luke, was brought into the city, and carried through the streets in solemn procession to the Cathedral.

PALLAS, BY SANDRO BOTTICELLI.

In the private apartments of the Pitti Palace. This picture, recently discovered, is believed to commemorate the return of Lorenzo from Naples in 1480. It represents the triumph of Medicean civilisation and peace, over anarchy and war. Pallas is wreathed with olive branches.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

The conditions of peace were tolerable; Ferrante ad realised that it was his interest that Lorenzo should be the permanent head of Florence, and his supremacy depended upon his tiding over the present crisis. It was, of course, impossible to maintain the integrity of Florentine territory; San Savino, Colle, Poggibonsi, Castellina, and other places in the Chianti were ceded to Siena. A greater misfortune was the absence of all mention of Sarzana; the King of Naples might well assert that its surprise by the Fregosi was no concern of his, that it was an incident of private war or piracy. An annual indemnity, under the honourable title of *condotta*, was awarded to the Duke of Calabria. Several instalments of 30,000 florins were extorted from the citizens, and taxes in all their intricate forms were piled on apace. It was a bad precedent, thought the humbler sort, that everyone who ruined and robbed the countryside should receive payment for his pains, and this not once, but throughout all time both past and future. Let him, they cried, who wants money from the Florentines, come and do them wrong. The Florentines, however, escaped the humiliation of any payment to Girolamo Riario. On the other hand, to gratify the Pope, his rebellious feudatories of Romagna were not included in the peace, although Ferrante engaged that their interests should be safe in his hands. It was stipulated that the Pazzi imprisoned at Volterra should be released, a condition which relieved the government from the embarrassment of keeping in indefinite confinement persons of high position who were notoriously innocent.

Lorenzo and his city were not yet, however, in smooth waters. The peace was proclaimed at Rome, because, without Ferrante's aid, the Pope was in no condition to continue war. But the Florentine ambassadors were unable to effect a reconciliation, and the interdict was not withdrawn. Once more Sixtus urged that Lorenzo should come to Rome in person, and once more he was solemnly warned by the Duke of Ferrara not to expose himself to such a danger. The Venetians, profoundly discontented, regarded their alliance with Florence and Milan as at an end, and entered into a separate treaty with the Pope. Very threatening, moreover, was the attitude of the Duke of Calabria. He still lingered in Sienese territory, under pretence of resisting a reported invasion by the new Angevin claimant, young René of Lorraine. He employed his time in lavishing his favours upon the people of Siena, he became the centre of the extravagant pleasure-loving Sienese society, and the cruel passionate Alfonso, who recognised no scruples in matters human and divine, became the popular godfather to the babies of the republic. His quarters were at an easy distance from the city in the little walled town of Buon-Convento, distinguished as the death-scene of the pious Henry of Luxemburg. While the Duke was here a revolution broke out in Siena. The aristocrats, the Monte de' Nove, with the aid of Neapolitan troops, seized the *piazza*, overthrew the popular government, recalled their exiles, and banished or impoverished their opponents. It was believed that Alfonso, following in the steps of his father and grandfather, and of King Ladislas,

intended Siena to be a *place d'armes* for the furtherance of Neapolitan ambitions in Tuscany; that even as Ferrante built upon the monarchical element at Florence, so his son would rest at Siena on an aristocracy which could only keep its seat while he held the bridle.

Florence in her greatest need had been saved from Gian Galeazzo Visconti by the plague. The other pest of Europe in the fifteenth century, the Turk, rid her of Alfonso. The closing act of the tragedy of the Pazzi conspiracy was as melodramatic as was its opening. "As it pleased God," wrote the grocer Landucci after recounting the events at Siena, "it came about by his consummate miracle that on the sixth day of August, 1480, the fleet of the Turk came to Otranto, and besieged it; whence Alfonso by order of the King was forced to return to the kingdom in defence of that town." The long-expected blow had at length fallen upon Italy. One of Mohammed's ablest generals, wishing to make some compensation for the disastrous repulse at Rhodes, had with 7000 troops slipped across the Adriatic, besieged and stormed the city of Otranto. Turkish forces at once began to gather in Albania, it was felt that Keduk Achmed's *corps* was but the advance guard of a march on Rome. The Venetians, in their hostility to Ferrante, were suspected of giving the signal to the Turk; their fleet which was in reality engaged in covering Corfu, had the appearance of forming a convoy to the Turkish transports. With perhaps more reason, Lorenzo, who gained most from the attack, was accused of being its author; men

remembered the boasted influence at the Porte, which only a few months before had resulted in the extradition of Baroncelli. Not only was Tuscany freed from the presence of Alfonso, but Sixtus was forced to be reconciled to Florence. At the close of 1480 an embassy was sent to Rome to perform the act of submission and to receive the absolution of the Pope. The confession of past offences was made in the most general terms, there was no reference to any specific acts, the citizens in their corporate and private capacity had doubtless been guilty of sins which the superior wisdom of his Holiness might recognise, and for this they begged to receive his pardon. The embassy, however, was to admit no proposal of pecuniary satisfaction, nor should it suffer the exclusion of any individual from the general pardon, nor linger in a humiliating position at Rome, if absolution were not granted within reasonable time.

The Pope was in no position to make hard terms, and on the first Sunday in Advent the envoys, with Luigi Guicciardini as their spokesman, besought forgiveness on their knees beneath the portico of St. Peter's. The Pope from his throne reprimanded them for their offences against the Church. They were spared the humiliation of baring their backs for chastisement; the Pope touched each envoy on the shoulder with a staff, the Cardinals repeating after him the words "Miserere mei Deus." The ambassadors then received the blessing, the bronze gates were flung open for the forgiven citizens, and preceded by Sixtus borne upon his throne, the Cardi-

nals, the clergy, the envoys and the crowd passed into the spacious nave to hear the high mass which celebrated the reunion of the most faithful city with the Church. The spirit displayed in this final act did credit to all who were concerned, except to the turbulent Roman mob, whose unseemly noise had detracted from the solemnity of the ceremony and drowned the voice of the aged Guicciardini. The condition which Sixtus imposed upon the Florentines that they should equip fifteen galleys for the Turkish war, was indeed burdensome in the present state of their finances, but at least it had no reference to the private interests of the Papal family; it was one which the head of Christendom might reasonably impose upon the State which had confessed its guilt.

Strozzi.

Rucellai.

Giovanna Albizzi, and reverse.

CHAPTER VI.

War of Ferrara—Election of Innocent VIII.—The Neapolitan Barons' War—Affair of Osimo—Assassinations in Romagna—Lorenzo's diplomacy.

1480–1492.

HAD Mohammed II. lived, Italian history might have been very different. Keduk Achmed had made Otranto almost impregnable. The Sultan in person was marching through Asia Minor to a fresh attempt on Rhodes; hence he would turn either on Egypt or on Italy. An attack of colic came to the aid of Western civilisation, and the great conqueror died on May 3, 1481. His successor, Bajazet, was neither so capable nor so warlike, and his authority was disputed by his half-brother, Djem, who posed as the leader of the soldiery. The Turkish garrison of Otranto was disheartened, its leaders anxious to play their part in the civil war at home. Thus the Duke of Calabria gained a somewhat easy reputation by the

capitulation of the town in September, 1481. Many of the Janissaries entered Neapolitan service, and from the defences of Otranto, Italian engineers, so said Trivulzio, learnt a valuable lesson in the use of earthworks. Now, if ever, was the opportunity for a crusade. Ferrante urged the Pope to organise a naval expedition for the Levant, while his son-in-law, Matthias Corvinus, was prepared to open a campaign upon the Danube if the Pope would give moral and pecuniary support, and guarantee Hungary against the Emperor's attack. But crusades had been discredited and were out of fashion. Sixtus IV., who had in times past shown a real interest in the movement, had fallen under the influence of his nephew, Girolamo. To this ex-custom-house clerk the possession of a brace of towns in the old Exarchate of the Eastern Empire was of more consequence than the fall of its capital. Thus, while Sixtus despatched perfunctory diplomats throughout Europe, the policy of the Curia was directed towards Romagna.

Already towards the close of 1480, Girolamo had added Forlì to Imola. The old ruling family, the Ordelaffi, had been divided in the recent war. The hardships or diversions of military life had been enough to kill the supporter of the Pope. Antoniello, his hardier brother, seized the sovereignty with the favour of the people. Sixtus loyally supported his late ally's infant son, expelled Antoniello, and on the infant's opportune removal, forfeited the fief and bestowed it on Girolamo. That Lorenzo bore this patiently is the strongest proof of his exhaustion.

There is a tolerable pass from Forlì into Tuscan territory; Forlì is also close to Faenza, the destruction of the Ordelaffi presaged that of the Manfredi, and then Florence would be excluded from the Adriatic, and the well-worn path up the Val Lamone laid open to Girolamo. All that Lorenzo could do was to give Antoniello Ordelaffi shelter at Modigliana in Florentine Romagna, and draw tighter his relations with the Manfredi. Forlì formed a most useful stepping-stone between the Papal States and Imola, but Antoniello's bravos scoured the road between Girolamo's two towns, and the timid ruler required constant escort.

The easy acquisition of Forlì turned Girolamo's hot head. If Forlì, why not Ferrara, the greatest and richest, and most strategically important of Papal fiefs? To the house of Este the greater Italian dynasties of the fifteenth century were but as mushrooms. Its power had originally rested on popular election, and the superstructure had been cemented by a compound of capacity, cruelty, lust, art, and literature. Prescription had raised the Este from the level of the ordinary tyrant to that of "*Signori Naturali.*" Their political existence was, however, probably due to the fact that Ferrara was the keystone of a very peculiar arch, it was kept in position by the pressure of Venice and Milan on each other, for hitherto the suzerainty of the Papacy had been little more than nominal. On the other hand, the territories of the house offered a temptation to partition. Ferrara itself lay south of the Po, but between the Po and the Adige lay the Polesina

of Rovigo, flat and fertile, a natural continuation of the Lombard-Venetian plain. The Venetians had crossed the Adige to the East, where it was really a natural frontier; it was inevitable that they should cross it to the south, and reach the boundary of the Po. The house of Este possessed, moreover, the duchy of Modena and Reggio, on the great high road from Bologna to Piacenza. These were held under a completely different title; they were not Papal but Imperial fiefs, a distinction which has had its importance down to the present century.

Since 1454 the policy of Venice on the mainland had been timid. But the new Doge, Mocenigo, who had commanded her fleets against the Turk, felt the hopelessness of the Eastern war, and resolved to seek compensation within Italy; he returned to the policy of Francesco Foscari. The Venetians henceforth approved of the extinction of the old families of Romagna at the hands of Papal nephews, whether Riario or Borgia, because they could have no hereditary position, they broke the pasture and sowed the seed, which the everlasting Republic must needs harvest. Thus Girolamo, on visiting Venice, was received as though he were an Emperor, and was made a patrician of the Republic. He was encouraged in his schemes on Faenza, and when he spoke of the conquest of Naples, he was told that prudence and secrecy seemed the chief essentials. But the main result was a plan for the partition of Ferrara apparently on the lines that Venice should take the Imperial fiefs, leaving Ferrara to the Papacy. It was easy to pick a quarrel. The Venetians had the

right of keeping a resident judge in Ferrara to try the suits of Venetian subjects. This official had been excommunicated by the Bishop of Ferrara's vicar in consequence of a priest's imprisonment for debt. Again, the Venetians claimed for their salt-works at Cervia, which lies on the skirts of Dante's pine forest between Rimini and Ravenna, the monopoly of the supply of North Italy. The Duke of Ferrara, however, could obtain salt in quantity from the shallows which lie round Comacchio, a town which has owed its amphibious existence to salt and eels. The Duke refused to abandon his manufacture, and war began in May, 1482.

A combination between the Pope and Venice for extension in Romagna was certain to bring Lorenzo and Ludovico into the field. The King of Naples was still less likely to stand out. His feud with Venice had been the main cause of his action against Florence, and since then grievances had accumulated. The Venetians, he believed, had been instrumental in the Turkish capture of Otranto, while the marriage of his daughter to the Duke of Ferrara was regarded as a threat by the Republic, and had perhaps determined the Venetian-Papal alliance. Ludovico, as Lorenzo, had personal motives for his action. Ruberto San Severino had quarrelled with his fellow-adventurer, professing to resent the exclusion of the young Duke from all share in government, and had fled to Venice. In the territory of Parma, loosely attached to the Duchy of Milan, the influential house of Rossi were holding their castles against the Government. Thus of the five great powers, the old

Triple Alliance, Naples, Milan, and Florence, stood against the other two. A glance at the map will prove that the rulers of Bologna, Mantua, and Faenza must needs resist the advance of the Pope and Venice. The attitude of Genoa was determined by hostility to Milan and to Florence, that of Siena by hostility to her Tuscan neighbour. Even the Duke of Savoy and the Marquis of Montferrat were dragged into the whirl of war, and prepared to act against the western frontiers of Milan. For the condottieri of Romagna and the Papal States this was a great opportunity of making money. There was a scramble for command, a game of "General Post." The Venetians secured Ruberto Malatesta, while Federigo of Urbino commanded the armies of the League. The bestowal of the *bâton* upon Costanzo Sforza had given the Florentines a long day's holiday. Upon the platform in the great *piazza* he had received the staff, the helmet, the banner with the silver lily on a crimson ground, and an eloquent address from Bartolommeo Scala, the Chancellor.

Lorenzo's obvious policy was to embarrass the Pope by an attack upon his northern frontiers, while threatening Girolamo in Romagna through the Manfredi and Ordelaffi. Against the Pope the Florentines met with much success. Lorenzo's *protégé*, Niccolò Vitelli, was restored to Città di Castello, to the delight of its inhabitants. The easiest road from Rome to Romagna was thus blocked, and the Medici had established as an outpost beyond their frontiers a family which rendered grateful service in the future. Their troops, again, moving from Arezzo in support

of Vitelli, crossed the ridge between the valleys of the Arno and the Tiber and ultimately took Citerna. These were, however, mere incidents in the war, which must be decided by the more military powers.

The Venetians proved too quick for the Duke of Ferrara's Milanese and Neapolitan allies. San Severino crossed the Adige, and in Federigo's teeth took Ficarolo, thus securing the passage of the Po. Meanwhile the Duke of Calabria in conjunction with the Colonna ravaged Papal territory to the walls of Rome. Girolamo Riario possessed neither courage nor competence. The Pope implored Venice to send Malatesta to his aid, and thus the interest of the war was transferred from the Po to the Tiber. Alfonso retreated before Malatesta to a strong position covered by pine scrub and deep ditches at Santa Maria in Formis, in the malarious waste known as Campo Morto. The battle which ensued was perhaps the briskest feat of Italian arms in this half century. Malatesta, beaten back at the first onset, by his personal valour broke the Neapolitan resistance, and drove Alfonso in headlong flight to Sermoneta. The Duke owed his escape, it is said, to the bravery of his Turks, who covered the retreat and fell in numbers along the ditches which they held. The weakness of Italian arms was, however, proved by the lukewarmness of pursuit. Malatesta returned to Rome to enjoy his triumph, and there he died. His death was variously ascribed to fatigue and climate, to copious potations of Campo Morto water in the heat of fight, and to Girolamo Riario's poison.

FEDERIGO OF MONTEFELTRO, DUKE OF URBINO.

Portrait by Piero della Francesca in the Uffizi Gallery.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

The conflict was, in fact, as much between the fevers of the Campagna and of the marshes of the Po, as between the two opposing leagues. The army which defended Ferrara was decimated by disease, Federigo of Urbino had to leave the camp, and his death was contemporaneous with that of his neighbour of Rimini. It was a pathetic coincidence. The two rival generals had bequeathed to each other the care of their children and estates, a characteristic illustration of the easy good-fellowship in this game of Italian war. Girolamo, who had lurked in the tents at Campo Morto, was ready enough to share the spoils. There is reason to believe that he intended to deprive Malatesta's heirs of Rimini, even as he had wrested Forlì from the Ordelaffi. It was mainly to Lorenzo that the protection of the young Pandolfo, the last of the Malatesta line, was due. He had, moreover, been active in other quarters. A Council was recognised as a good stick wherewith to beat a fractious Pope, and as chance would have it a Council had been proclaimed.

Andrea Zuccalmaglio, Archbishop of Carniola, had visited Rome in 1479 as the Emperor's envoy. The simple Slav was shocked at the complex morals of the Curia, and had not the guile to hold his tongue. Remonstrance was rewarded, not by the Cardinal's hat, which he had coveted, but by a short term in the cells of the Castle of Sant' Angelo. He left Rome flaming with indignation, at once righteous and personal, and at Basel, the traditional hotbed of schism, matured his Conciliar scheme, and cited Sixtus IV., "that son of the devil who did his

father's works." Nothing can more forcibly illustrate the dislike in which the Church was held than the fact that from Lady-day to Christmas, 1482, this scatter-brained, self-styled Cardinal, without any official position, should set the Papacy at defiance. The people of Basel gave him warm welcome, the Emperor long seemed to waver. Lorenzo thought that political capital might be made out of the Conciliar movement. Baccio Ugolini was sent to Basel in company with a Milanese envoy, and after a time seems on his own responsibility to have offered official support to Zuccalmaglio. Lorenzo, however, left his agent without further instructions; he would not commit himself too far. But he succeeded in his aim. At the close of the year Zuccalmaglio was, indeed, surrendered and thrown into prison, where he afterwards committed suicide, but Sixtus IV. had been thoroughly frightened. He reconsidered his position, and determined upon peace; in his apology to the Venetians he stated that the fear of a schism was the chief cause of his change of front.

This withdrawal of Sixtus IV. from the Venetian alliance is an interesting moment in Italian history, for the Pope's action was due in great measure to the rising influence of his nephew Giuliano della Rovere, which had hitherto been overshadowed by that of his cousin Girolamo. Giuliano, who, as Pope Julius II., was to be mainly instrumental in restoring Lorenzo's sons to Florence in 1512, had never shared the resentment of his uncle and cousin against the Medici. He had protested against the war of 1478, and during the Ferrarese war had ac-

cepted a magnificent reception at Leghorn on his way from France. He realised that it was not the interest of the Papacy to combat the weaker power of Florence, traditionally faithful to its interests; that the obstacle to the territorial expansion of the Papacy was Venice. Giuliano knew that Ferrara would not fall to his cousin's lot, but to that of the Republic. He dreaded Venetian expansion in Romagna more than he desired that of Girolamo. The town was now hard pressed. But for the exhortations of Lorenzo and of Lorenzo's devoted and stout-hearted envoy, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, the Duke would have abandoned his capital and fled to Modena. The action of Cesare d'Este in 1597 would have been forestalled, but in favour of Venice, and not of the Pope. The recovery of Romagna by the Papacy would have been made impossible.

Lorenzo had worked hard to bring the Pope to peace. The success, however, was the immediate work of the Spanish Ambassador at Rome who reconciled the Pope and the King of Naples. The war in Italy was becoming a European question; the Spanish sovereigns were alarmed at the invitation of Sixtus to the King of France and the Dauphin to interfere. So hurriedly was the peace made with Naples that the Florentine Government had no time to secure the satisfaction of its separate interests. Nevertheless, in spite of irritation Lorenzo felt immediate relief. The Triple was changed into a Quadruple Alliance. Venice naturally refused to relinquish her prey at the Pope's command, and a Diet of the Allies met at Cremona to decide upon

measures for the active prosecution of the war. Hither went Lorenzo as Florentine commissioner. He met, however, the princes of Italy, the Duke of Calabria, Ludovico Moro, the Duke of Ferrara, and the Marquis of Mantua, on equal terms; his good sense and powers of expression and persuasion gave him an importance which the military weakness of Florence denied to him in the field. It was believed to be at no slight risk that he visited the Congress where he might be exposed to the plots of his old enemy Girolamo Riario. The Florentine people were loath to let him go, and his sincere well-wisher Louis XI. wrote to warn him against the danger.

The Congress resolved to take the offensive, and there was a yet wider scheme, a presage of the League of Cambrai, for a partition of Venetian territories. Ferrante proposed that the Papacy should receive Ravenna and Cervia, which would be added to Girolamo's possessions; to Milan Brescia and Bergamo should be restored while Florence and Naples should not go empty-handed. Success was not immediate. The Florentine general Costanzo Sforza refused to obey orders, and was suspected of treachery. He left Ferrara and was dismissed; his death freed Florence from an offended servant who might prove dangerous. The Venetian fleet harried the coasts of Apulia and secured Gallipoli together with smaller ports. This was in furtherance of long-standing Venetian ambition to obtain a chain of factories on the western coast of the Adriatic, which should correspond to those which she held on its

eastern shores, and should make it difficult for the Aragonese dynasty to realise its claims in Greece. Venice, moreover, took into her service the Duke of Lorraine; his reward should be the aid of the Republic in the assertion of his title to the throne of Naples. Yet the allies soon experienced the value of the Pope's friendship. The Duke of Calabria could now reach the main scene of action without opposition. San Severino, indeed, crossed the Adda and made a dash for Milan. His ostensible aim was to restore the young Duke and his mother to the government. But in the Parmesan the rebellion of the Rossi collapsed; the Duke of Ferrara beat the Duke of Lorraine, while Alfonso inflicted a decisive defeat on the Venetians at Argenta. Venice could with difficulty support the pecuniary strain, the provinces of Brescia and Bergamo were at the mercy of the Neapolitans and Milanese, the presence of a Turkish ambassador at Florence caused alarm. She then took the desperate resolve of inviting the Duke of Orleans to lay claim to Milan, and the King of France to support the Duke of Lorraine. This may have been little more than a threat, but it brought peace.

Ludovico Moro had long been lukewarm, incurring Lorenzo's suspicion and indignation. He disliked the presence of Alfonso in Lombardy; his nephew, the young Duke, was engaged to his cousin, Alfonso's daughter; it was unlikely that Alfonso would tolerate Ludovico's monopoly of the government. It was a far cry from Lorraine to Naples, but the French garrison of Asti, the Orleanist dower town, lay close on the Milanese frontier; he, Ludovico,

who had least interest in the war would have to bear its costs. The Venetian diplomatists saw him waver, the young San Severini had fled from Venice and were already in his service, the father was now reconciled with his old comrade in adventure, and Comines has expressed the general belief that 60,000 ducats was the price of Ludovico's mediation. The result was the peace of Bagnolo of August, 1484, which was forced upon the allies much against their will. The Venetians restored the Apulian towns, but they retained the Polesina, and the Po became their permanent frontier. No satisfaction was given to Florence on the subject of Sarzana; the Pope had spent much and gained nothing; the recovery of Ravenna and Cervia for the Holy See was reserved for the Papacy of his nephew. There seems little doubt that the fit of passion caused by the news of the peace of Bagnolo killed the Pope. Sixtus, said contemporaries, lived on war, and peace must needs be his death. After the wild outburst he lay fifteen hours as still as death, and then passed away on August 12, 1484.

This war of Ferrara was not in itself of first-rate importance. It is interesting, nevertheless, as an illustration of the want of concentration and dash in Italian strategy and tactics, while the methods of Italian diplomacy in the formation and solution of alliances are peculiarly modern. The private negotiations which forced upon unwilling allies the treaties of Rome and Bagnolo resemble the "Preliminaries" which characterise the international relations of the eighteenth century. There are,

moreover, striking parallels exhibited between the policy of Sixtus IV. and his greater nephew Julius II.; between the war of Ferrara and the more momentous conflict of Cambrai. In both cases the Papacy turned its coat in the middle of the war, and in both this operation was decisive of the result. In the war of Cambrai Julius ordered the Duke of Ferrara to withdraw from the attack on Venice, as in that of Ferrara he ordered Venice to abandon her campaign against the Duke; yet in both the Pope had been mainly instrumental in the original attack. The suggested partition of Venetian territories between the Papacy, Naples, Milan, and Florence foreshadows the more celebrated partition treaty of Cambrai, the Cardinal who negotiates the one is the Pope who executes the other. As in the earlier war the Papacy aimed first at Ferrara and then at Ravenna and Cervia, in the latter she but reversed the order. The rivalry between the salt pans of Cervia and Comacchio was a prominent grievance of the Venetians, as of their successor at Cervia, the Pope. Uncle and nephew each laid an interdict against Venice, and on each occasion it was treated with contempt; uncle and nephew were alike threatened with an abortive Council, as the ecclesiastical penalty of temporal ambition. The general invitation to Angevin and Orleanist in 1483 had been by 1509 only too definitely accepted. The attack on Venice was on both occasions financed by Florence; by the one war she had hoped for the recovery of Sarzana, as by the other she obtained the restitution of Pisa.

In this war Lorenzo had gained more than appeared on the surface: he had advanced his reputation both in Italy and at Florence. He was no longer venturesome or impatient, and yet had not relapsed into the opposite extreme of timidity. The neutrality which both Machiavelli and Guicciardini later regarded as the fatal tendency of the weak republic had been avoided; Lorenzo had without hesitation chosen his side, and yet had never burnt his ships. Throughout the war his moral support and encouragement had done more to keep the Duke of Ferrara at his post than the half-hearted military operations of the allies. With Ludovico he had not quarrelled, though the provocation received was great. He was probably wise in the hint which he conveyed to the Duke that he would do well to follow his own example in the previous war and throw himself upon the generosity of Venice rather than trust to the interested mediation of Milan. The sudden change in the Pope's policy had been a test of Lorenzo's prudence. The Florentines saved their honour by depositing their conquest Citerna in the hands of the King and Queen of Spain. Niccolò Vitelli was by Lorenzo reconciled to the Pope. The Vitelli recognised the Papal suzerainty, and yet Lorenzo had added another link to the chain of small protected states with which it was his policy to encircle the Florentine State. It was through his agency that the chain had not been broken in Romagna; none but Lorenzo had intervened to secure Rimini to Malatesta's bastard. Anxious as he was for the recovery of Sarzana he had refrained from needlessly

provoking the Genoese. Above all, he had admirably handled the relations of Florence and Siena, a question which lay apart from the general issues of the war. The Duke of Calabria had hoped to retain a foothold in Tuscany by establishing an aristocratic government in Siena. To Lorenzo it was clear that, notwithstanding the expressions of Neapolitan devotion, Florence could only recover her lost possession on the Sienese frontier in despite of Naples. He did not, however, force events; he could afford to play a waiting game which in Sienese politics could never be a long one. Piero Giovanni Ricasoli, devoted to Lorenzo's government in return for the well merited honours which it had bestowed, was watching Sienese affairs from the neighbouring castle upon which the eye of the modern visitor to Siena is in its turn wont to rest. He reported that the people seemed tired of the monopoly of power and profit by the aristocracy; they wished that every man should have his particle of power, that in every game the people should be captain. 'But," added the contemptuous country gentleman, 'there is no foundation to be laid on their mad pranks: they are just a stir-about of fools: it is a people that will always turn to the side which can best fill their bellies: there is not one of those roughs who would not make five and twenty revolutions in a day for a drink." Lorenzo judged differently, or perhaps it was precisely he who at this moment could best "fill their belly" and provide the *pot-de-vin*. A little crowd, some thirty in all, gathered in the semicircular *piazza*. From the windows of the tow-

ering palace at its lower end, an obnoxious magnate was thrown upon the herring-boned brick pavement underneath. It takes less than this to make a mob. As the crowd increased, so did the number of the magistrates who were dashed upon the bricks, on which the champions of the several districts of Siena still race for the *palio* at almost equal risk. The aristocrats who were not brained were exiled, and the revolution was complete. The democracy did not love Florence, but Lorenzo was the natural protector against Alfonso, and internal expansion was bought by external shrinkage. Siena surrendered most of her recent acquisitions. Lorenzo covered his southern frontier with a dependent state whose fortunes depended on his own, and yet contrived not to quarrel with Alfonso. The little Florentine towns to the north and east of Siena were filled with Sienese exiles who might some day serve a turn.

Another fortunate incident followed closely on the war. The peace of Bagnolo had made no mention of Sarzana. This town was overlooked by Castruccio Castrocani's old fortress of Sarzanella. A Florentine convoy for this castle protected by a weak and careless escort was plundered in full peace by the Genoese soldiers in Pietra-Santa. It was generally believed that the carelessness was studied. Pietra-Santa was more important than Sarzana. Lying close under the mountains it absolutely blocks the narrow strip of coast. It had been built by the Lucchese to command their outlet towards the Genoese *riviera;* its acquisition by Florence would seem to place Lucca at her mercy, and to command any

advance by land from Genoa or Milan. The Florentine forces at once gathered round the town—Lorenzo's chief adherents, Jacopo Guicciardini, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, and Antonio Pucci, were sent as commissaries. The advancement of the vulgar and unscrupulous Pucci is to the present day one of the commonplace charges against the Medici. Antonio justified the promotion of his father by old Cosimo. The condottieri, as usual, shirked attack on a fortified position. Pucci shamed them into action by crying: "Come now, give me your cuirass and I will lead the soldiers, while you stay here with these good fathers the commissaries." The attack was beaten off with loss, but Pucci went round the tents with doctors and a bag of gold, tending the wounded, cheering and kissing them, and saying: "If any one wants money, now is the time to speak." After this, as Cambi writes, the mercenaries would have marched straight to hell in the service of the Marzocco; on the next assault nothing could resist them, and Pietra-Santa fell. The cost, however, had been great. A cannon-ball had carried away the head of the Florentine general, Antonio da Marciano. Fever raged along the low slip of shore, and Gianfigliazzi and Pucci were brought home dead. Lorenzo seemed to have lost the half of his truest friends. Before the end came he himself had joined the camp, and upon him as the survivor the honours of the conquest fell. With this his modern detractors have reproached him, charging him with shrinking from the danger and then reaping its reward. It was not, however, Lorenzo's business to be either commissary or con-

dottiere; it was when the fever was hazarding the fortunes of the campaign that he bravely visited the camp. In the previous century the Chancellor Salutati had reproached the *bourgeois* aristocrats with leaving the poor to the plague, and their warehouses to anarchists. This reproach could not have been brought against Lorenzo. He would send his family to the hills in time of pestilence, but would not himself desert his post as long as his presence was required. Even if allowance be made for flattery and their service the applause of contemporaries was more justly due than the arm-chair criticism of today. Rejoicing at Florence was unfeigned, the key of the Lunigiana had been won. "A bit had been placed in the mouth of Lucca."

The death of Sixtus IV. seemed a fitting conclusion to the war of Ferrara. In this, as in the war against Lorenzo, the Pope had been mainly instrumental. It was hoped that under a new Pope Italy might enjoy a period of peace. The choice of the Conclave fell upon the Cardinal Cybò. As in Florence and Bologna so in the Papacy there was a tendency towards hereditary succession. The two chief candidates were the Cardinal Borgia, nephew of Calixtus III. and the Cardinal Barbo, nephew of Paul II. The elected Pope was but a weak and kindly dummy; the power of the Papacy really lay with Giuliano della Rovere, nephew of the dead Pope, who by bribery and compromise had carried the election of his creature. "San Pietro in Vincola," wrote Vespucci from Rome, "is Pope and more than Pope."

Lorenzo de' Medici had every reason to be grate-

ful; Giuliano della Rovere was at once friendly to himself and hostile to Girolamo Riario. In the recent faction fight, Giuliano had protected the Colonna, had remonstrated against the power of the Papacy being abused for party ends. Girolamo threatened to burn his house over his head, to turn him out of the Papal States. There was now little chance of danger from Imola and Forlì, still less of a new combination between the Pope and Venice. Innocent moreover was a Genoese, he might persuade his countrymen to settle amicably the vexed question of Sarzana. It became a fixed principle of Lorenzo's policy to avoid a breach with the Papacy, and at the same time to check its temporal aggrandisement. The policy of the Papacy was fluctuating and capricious; if Lorenzo could control its counsels the peace of Italy might be secure.

With the ambassadors sent by the Republic to congratulate Innocent on his accession, Lorenzo sent his eldest son Piero, then a boy of fourteen. The Pope warmly responded to these overtures, yet within a year Lorenzo was involved in the war between Innocent and King Ferrante. To Giuliano della Rovere was probably due the breach between the Curia and Naples. He had thwarted the election of Ferrante's son, the Cardinal of Aragon; he hated the Spanish party in the Consistory to which the Neapolitan Cardinal and Ascanio Sforza belonged; all his interests were with France. Thus he encouraged Innocent to demand the full tribute due to the Pope, as suzerain, instead of the complimentary white palfrey, for which Sixtus had com-

muted it, to protest against the claims of Ferrante to the appointment to Neapolitan benefices, and against the shameless simony which sold them to the highest bidder. The rupture might have been averted but that Ferrante at this moment treacherously seized some of his principal barons, and among them the Count of Montorio, the leading nobleman of Aquila, a turbulent town on the Papal Neapolitan borders, which claimed the immunities of a free city.

This event was but an incident in the dualism of centuries between the monarchical and the oligarchical principles in the Kingdom of Naples. The contrast was sharper than in any country of Western Europe; there was no middle class to temper the conflict; such few towns as existed were under the absolute control of the Crown, or at the mercy of the local nobles. The barons strove to make government impossible, and the government retaliated by treachery and brutality, draining the country by taxation to support the large standing army which should overawe the baronage. Ferrante had hitherto had sufficient self-control to remain on tolerable terms with his nobles, but he was now falling under the influence of his heir, less capable and more brutal than himself, filled with overweening conceit at his military success against the Turks and the Venetians. The nobles broke into open revolt. Aquila massacred the royal governor and garrison and hoisted the Cross Keys. War was declared between Pope and King, and the question was how far could it be limited. While the Neapolitans ravaged the

Campagna from the south, the Orsini horsemen, but for Giuliano's vigilance, would have forced an entry into the capital. The Venetians excused themselves from openly entering the Pope's alliance, but they allowed Ruberto San Severino to take service, and he arrived with his squadrons just in time to save Rome from capture.

What part should Lorenzo play in this quarrel in which he had absolutely no interest? It was impossible for him to sympathise with the anarchical aristocracy of Naples, yet the brutality of Alfonso was alien to the refined Florentine and to the traditions of his house. A rupture with the Papacy thwarted his political schemes, and his family ambition of ecclesiastical advancement for his younger son. Alfonso, moreover, was hated in Florence. The people had never forgiven the sufferings which he had inflicted in the recent war. He had quite lately added to the public indignation on his return from his Lombard campaign. Entertained at the Republic's expense during his passage through their territories he had nevertheless refused to dismount from his horse to return the greeting of the Signoria. It is stated, and it is not improbable, that in the Pratica, opinion was almost unanimous against the Neapolitan alliance, and that it needed all Lorenzo's eloquence and argument to turn the scale. Yet to remain neutral Lorenzo knew to be impossible; should either the Pope or the King win a decisive victory, he would be at the mercy of the victor. He determined that the old Triple Alliance must at all costs be preserved, and he urged Ludo-

vico to fulfil his treaty obligations. Meanwhile he made every effort to heal the quarrel. His ambassador at Rome pleaded Ferrante's cause before the Pope. He wrote personally to Ferrante urging him to remove the causes of discontent, and especially to moderate taxation. His efforts were in vain. The Pope was as obstinate as are most weak characters, and Ferrante hoped for an easy victory. San Severino however was no mean soldier, he outgeneralled Alfonso, checking his advance northwards and preventing his junction with the Orsini, who had gathered round the centre of their possessions on the Lake of Bracciano. Lorenzo with difficulty prevented the Sienese from embracing the Papal cause; the leaders of the democracy urged that if the Neapolitans won, they would be at the mercy of Alfonso, the patron of the aristocratic exiles. Florence, moreover, had taken Virginio and Niccolò Orsini into her pay, and her subsidies kept the Orsini clansmen in the field. Yet though her troops were gathering on the frontier she rendered no actual service to her Neapolitan ally. Alfonso, reduced to desperate straits in the desolate Campagna, rode with a handful of horsemen night and day to throw himself upon Lorenzo's generosity. He appeared suddenly within Florentine territory at Montepulciano and would fain have come to Florence, or at least would see Lorenzo. But Lorenzo would have none of him; he was too gouty for politics; his own affairs were going badly, why should he trouble himself about others, he longed to be left alone and "have a good time." Thus Alfonso had to be content with a visit from two members of

the Otto di Pratica. He wished to create a diversion by utilising the civil discords of Perugia; the Florentines might support the Baglioni and detach the important Umbrian town from Papal obedience. To this policy Lorenzo was opposed; he was resolved to localise the quarrel, to give Alfonso the necessary superiority without needlessly irritating the Pope. Thus it was that sufficient aid was given to enable Alfonso to effect his junction with the Orsini at Bracciano. The Milanese auxiliaries were at length brought into the field; the capable Trivulzio with 400 mounted cross-bowmen rode through Florence, and at his hostelry, the Angel, had a personal interview with Lorenzo. It is interesting to notice their close relations in this year, for Trivulzio, the future Marshal of France, seems always to belong to another age, to the giant European struggle which ushered in the sixteenth century. San Severino was now driven slowly back. Rome was in daily fear of being stormed or starved. The conflict had spread from the Campagna to the College of Cardinals. Cardinal Balue, who headed the war party, and Borgia, who pressed for peace, railed scurrilous accusations at each other and well-nigh came to blows in the Papal presence.

At length came the peace for which every one was longing. The Papacy wielded against Ferrante its well-worn weapon, the revival of Angevin claims. Innocent had sent Giuliano della Rovere to beg for the aid of René of Lorraine. This by itself would be of little avail, but it seemed possible that he might find support in the French Crown. Louis

XI. was now dead. As Dauphin he had restlessly meddled in Italian politics, had schemed for the possession of Genoa, for a partition of Lombardy and the coast-line as far as Lucca between France and Savoy. But as King he had resolutely abstained from direct intervention, he had desired influence and not territory, and this influence he had exercised through the Medici, and especially through Lorenzo. His son Charles VIII. was yet a minor; his daughter, the regent, was likely to follow in her father's prudent footsteps. There were however many hot heads at Court, and it was doubtful how far Anne of Beaujeu could control the nobles. By the death of the Count of Maine, the reversion of Provence and the Neapolitan claims had, under the bequest of the old King René, fallen to the Crown. Young René of Lorraine was protesting in the courts and in the country against his exclusion from his grandfather's inheritance. The government was none too strong; it was disposed to compromise, to secure the annexation of Provence by awarding to René the claim to Naples. The restless prince would be better out of France; an auxiliary force, which should aid in entangling him in a Neapolitan war, would relieve the government of other turbulent spirits. Thus a French embassy passed on its way to Rome, and stopped at Florence to urge on Lorenzo the support of the Angevin claims in accordance with the old traditions of the Republic. Nothing could be more embarrassing. The trade of Florence depended mainly upon France, that of the Medici themselves upon their great branch

house at Lyons. The important commercial colony at Naples had been clamouring against Ferrante's high-handed measures. Discontent with the Neapolitan alliance was spreading, not only among the people, but among the principal Medicean families. Lorenzo would not directly yield to the French request. He argued that Innocent's support of the Angevin claims was but an afterthought, due to his distress, that the war had originated in purely selfish motives. Nevertheless he earnestly pressed upon Ferrante the necessity of peace. Ludovico also was looking anxiously towards France. Louis XI. had given the young Duke of Orleans little encouragement to urge his claims on Milan. Now, however, this youth, headstrong and ambitious, was threatening the Sforza, and harassing his own government. Anne of Beaujeu might avert the internal trouble that was soon to come by making Lombardy a second vent for noble turbulence.

Venice fearing these threats of French invasion threw her weight upon Ferrante's side. Once again Lorenzo had laboured for peace and was robbed of the credit of its conclusion. The Roman ambassador of Ferdinand and Isabella, who were anxiously watching the tentative movements of the French crown in Italy, offered his mediation. In the negotiations which followed the great humanist Pontano acted for Naples, the great soldier Trivulzio for the Duke of Milan; the Florentine ambassador Vespucci could only offer an occasional remonstrance. It was determined that Ferrante should pay the accustomed tribute and desist from his pretensions to

ecclesiastical appointments. On the other hand the Pope promised forgiveness to the Orsini, and abandoned Aquila and the Neapolitan barons, in case they would not submit to reasonable terms. To Florence and Milan was attributed the doubtful honour of guaranteeing the engagements of Ferrante and the Pope. The treatment of San Severino was regarded as a disgrace to the contracting powers. He was dismissed from Papal service, forbidden a passage through Papal and Milanese territories. Compelled to disband his army, he forced his way with a troop of horse to Ravenna, and once more found shelter and employment with his old masters, the Venetians. Italy always felt a sneaking sympathy for an adventurous soldier who would pull her princes' crowns about their ears. The adventurer's sons were still to play some part in Italian history, but the father's career was well-nigh over. In the following year he fought his last campaign on the frontiers of the Tyrol against Duke Sigismond, and here he fell.

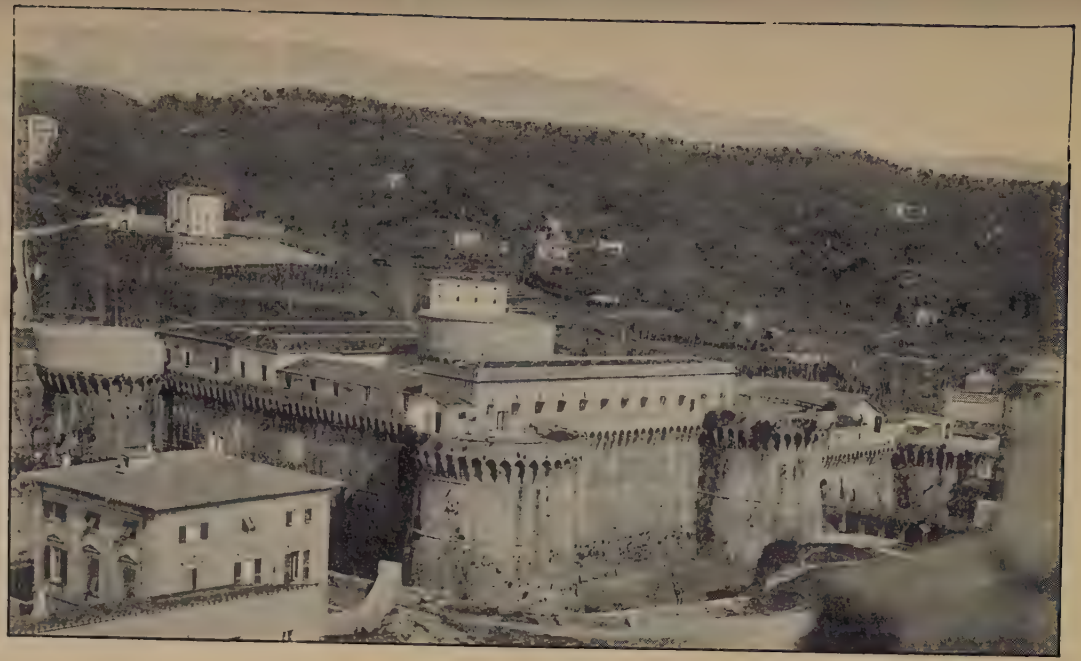
The peace between Ferrante and the Pope had been signed in August, 1486. Throughout the war Lorenzo had conducted separate negotiations with the Pope for a settlement of the question of Sarzana, but in vain. Late in the autumn the Ferrarese ambassador was told that the Florentines had no intention of taking active measures for the recovery of their town, because, as Lorenzo said, it was certain that Ludovico was in alliance with the Genoese; Florence would temporise until times should mend. A little later this ambassador brought Lo-

enzo word that the Genoese were seeking a Venetian alliance, and begging for the loan of San Severino. Lorenzo was speechless with annoyance. That morning he had heard that the Cardinal della Rovere, under pretence of performing a vow at Padua, had gone to negotiate a treaty with Venice. "I can believe any evil of this Pope," he cried, adding almost in the later words of Machiavelli: "This ecclesiastical state has always been the ruin of Italy, or its rulers are ignorant and do not understand statecraft, and so they run the whole world into danger; but if the King of Naples clears out his barons he will yet teach the Pope to read." This same papal-Venetian alliance alarmed Ludovico, who wrote to beg Lorenzo that byegones might be byegones, and a new book opened; in the future he would prove a good brother to his ally; he would not believe that Lorenzo had forgiven unless he asked him to render some great service; his person and his State should then be at Lorenzo's service. The reconciliation between the members of the old alliance was opportune, for at this moment the bank of St. George brought its punishment upon itself. Sarzana was felt to be no secure possession as long as the neighbouring fort of Sarzanella overlooked the town and threatened communications. Gian Luigi Fieschi suddenly attacked the fort, while his engineers pushed their mines beneath its walls. The Florentines, forced to action, inflicted a decisive defeat upon the besiegers, taking their general, Obietto Fieschi, prisoner. Their condottieri, the lords of Faenza, Piombino, Mirandola, Bologna, gathered

round Sarzana; Milanese horsemen rode over the hills from Parma; Neapolitans were landed on the coast. The mercenaries of the Bank made a stout resistance, they took and hung a cross-bowman, and sent two camp varlets back to their friends without their noses, a penalty well known to Stradiots and all who served on the coasts of Greece. Lorenzo himself moved to Pisa, and a fortnight before the end took up his quarters in the camp. On August 21st the town capitulated, the inhabitants were spared, but the soldiers wreaked their vengeance on the Genoese artillerymen. The last disgrace of the war of 1478 was now wiped out. Never was Lorenzo received at Florence with such rejoicings; to him above all other was attributed the victory.

All was not quite over, for in the following year (1488) a Genoese fleet sailed for Leghorn, and with infinite labour constructed floating batteries in the roadstead. Contrary winds, however, saved the all-important port. But the disasters of Genoa were to the detriment of Florence. The loss of Sarzana increased the discord between the factions of Adorni and Fregosi; independence seemed impossible to the divided republic. While the Adorni negotiated with France, the Doge, Cardinal Paolo Fregoso made over the sovereignty to Ludovico Moro. This more than compensated the Milanese ruler for the Florentine acquisition of Sarzana, which he had much disliked. Florence henceforth found a far more powerful rival on the Ligurian coast.

The five great powers of Italy were now at length at peace. Nevertheless, the atmosphere was highly



THE OLD WALLS OF SARZANA.

Fortified by Lorenzo de' Medici after the recapture in 1487.

harged, and every local disturbance seemed the pre-
age of fresh storms. Thus it had been with Sarzana,
nd thus it was with the rebellion of Osimo from the
Pope. Osimo was in itself a paltry town in the
March of Ancona, not otherwise celebrated in the
istory of the century. It was, however, the old
Roman colony of Auximum, of the walls of which
vide breadths may still be seen. This fact is enough
o prove that the military situation was important.
The town stands on an outpost of the Apennines,
igh above the plain, commanding the road from
Ancona southwards, and within easy distance of the
ea. Towards the end of the Papal-Neapolitan war
n adventurous scoundrel, Boccalino dei Guzzoni,
ad caused his city to revolt from Papal sovereignty.
his would seem to be merely the probable origin
f yet another dynasty of local despots so common
Romagna, whose practical independence would
e recognised on formal submission to the suzerainty
f St. Peter. Boccalino, however, feeling that he
ould hope for no substantial aid from any of the
reater Italian powers, applied to Bajazet for help,
ffering to hold the March as a feudatory of the
orte. It was a light matter for a few thousand
urkish troops to slip across the Adriatic in the
revalent easterly breezes of the early spring. Ro-
agna and the March would be as readily conquered
y the Porte as they had been subdued by the Sul-
n's predecessors in the Eastern Empire; the Sul-
n would be at no pains to find a Belisarius or a
arses. Osimo, its Roman fortifications strength-
ed with Turkish earthen outworks, would com-

mand the strip of plain from the Tronto to the Po
Such Papal riff-raff as garrisoned Ancona could neve
resist the professional forces of the Porte, which
would thus acquire the only important harbour be
tween Venice and Manfredonia. Romagna and the
March would become another Bosnia ruled by na
tive lords content to change such religion as they
had, if only they could preserve their local influence
Christianity hung loosely upon Italy, and most
loosely, if Machiavelli may be believed, where the
influence of the Vatican was most direct. It was
really fortunate perhaps for Italy that Boccalino's
messenger fell into the hands of the Neapolitan
governor of Lecce. This did not stop the course of
his negotiations, and during the ensuing siege a small
detachment of Turks was surprised in the attempt
to enter Osimo. But it forced the Pope to take
some action, ineffective as it was. For five months,
from the beginning of March to the end of July
1487, the impudent adventurer defied or hoodwinked
two great cardinals, Della Rovere and La Balue, and
the Papal and Milanese troops of Trivulzio, perhaps
the best officer of whom Italy could at this moment
boast. Even then Boccalino extorted what Trivul
zio termed a happy and honourable settlement, ar
ranged by the agency of Lorenzo's envoy. He
received a full pardon and some £4000. The moral
ity of Italy had fallen low, for Lorenzo gave this
rascal an honourable reception, paid him a portion
of the sums due from the Papacy, and instructed his
ambassador to inform the Pope that any hesitation
in the payment of the balance would be a stain upon

s honour which he should regret more than loss of fe and of all that was dear on earth. The Florennes were prepared to confer upon Boccalino the eedom of the city, a privilege, indeed, which other wns have granted to adventurers equally unworthy, nd would have gladly given him a command in their my. The affair of Osimo was but a feather which light breezes fell to ground, but it seemed to show at the wind was setting from the East.

It was natural that Lorenzo should have lent his plomatic aid to Innocent VIII., for throughout is year he was intent upon a marriage between the apal and Medicean households. His second daughr, Maddalena, was soon betrothed to Innocent's n, Franceschetto Cybò. This alliance might seem great match. Franceschetto was a careless idler ho had no positive qualities, nor sufficient push to eate for himself a position which might outlast s father's life. All that Lorenzo could say in his vour was that he avoided improper company and d not gamble, but as to the latter virtue he was ngularly mistaken. Maddalena's husband was oreover a bastard, born before his father entered ders. Bastardy was, however, as Comines obrved, scarcely regarded as an obstacle. Lorenzo's gh-minded friend, Federigo of Naples, was, perps, the only prince who would risk his throne cher than marry his daughter to the Borgia's bas'd son. A family alliance was likely to bring pal business to the Medicean bank; it would aid renzo in his heart's desire of obtaining the cardilate for his second son, and, above all, it was popu-

lar in Florence. Lorenzo himself bears witness to this regard for Florentine feeling. He feared that the marriage might give umbrage to Ferrante, and therefore assured the King that, naturally averse to such connections, he had not dared refuse for fear of offending both Pope and people. For twelve or thirteen years, he wrote, the city had been at cross purposes with the Holy See, and generally at open war; this had greatly displeased the Florentines, and the odium had fallen on himself.

Lorenzo not only connected his family with the Pope, but in a measure with the Crown of Naples. In 1487 Piero was wedded by proxy in the King's own palace to Alfonsina Orsini, the orphan of one of Ferrante's most faithful lords, and two years later both Piero and Franceschetto brought their brides to Florence. As a complement, or as a counterpoise, to the Papal-Medicean marriage, in 1489 the dynasties of Naples and Milan were yet more closely tied by the long-deferred wedding of Alfonso's daughter Isabella to her cousin, the young Duke. Venice alone stood without this matrimonial ring. But if the waters of Italy were calm, Venice could no longer fish the troubled waves.

The relations between the five Italian powers was not the only cause of anxiety to Lorenzo. Much stress was laid at Florence upon her connection with Romagna. The slightest disturbance in this violent and volcanic land vibrated through the Apennines to Tuscany. For Romagna the year 1488 was one of tragedies. Girolamo Riario had always been unpopular at Forlì. Rich as is the strip of territory

between the mountains and the Adriatic, it found difficulty in supporting so many little dynasties, each with its military and judicial staff, its extravagant Court, its artistic and literary rivalries. The taxes had been a constant source of disaffection at Forlì. Girolamo in a desperate attempt to gain popularity remitted the burdens on the peasantry, with the natural result that he was unable to satisfy his courtiers and his soldiers. Irritated and alarmed by Girolamo's refusals and threats, his courtiers Lorenzo and Cecco Orsi conspired with two mercenary captains for his murder. They gained access to his apartments after dinner and found him with his arms on the cushion of the window sill, looking down on the *piazza*. He had dined well, and in high good humour he turned to greet them. Lorenzo, professing to present a petition, stabbed him beneath the outstretched arm. In vain the unhappy man struggled to escape, trying to reach his wife's apartments and to crawl beneath the table. Stabbed through and through he was hurled from the windows to the square below. While the people dragged the despot's corpse about the streets, the conspirators secured Caterina Sforza and her children, and raised the cry of Church and Liberty. The town was in the hands of the assassins but its streets could be swept by the castle which stands on higher ground at the apex of the fan-shaped city. The commandant refused to surrender except on Caterina's personal command. By a *ruse* the brave woman entered the fortress, closed the gates, and hoisted the Sforza standard. The conspirators brought her

children beneath the castle and threatened to murder them if she would not surrender. She bade them do their worst; if lost the children could be replaced. Milanese and Bolognese troops forced the assassins to flee, and Caterina and her son Ottaviano were restored to power. She had to see one more husband or lover murdered, the handsome young Giacomo Feo, son of her faithful Castellan, and then to marry Lorenzo de' Medici's cousin Giovanni. From them sprang the Grand Ducal line which succeeded on the murder of Cosimo's great great-grandson, and which combined with the refined craft of the Medici much of the coarse violence of the Sforza.

This was not the only point of contact between the tragedy of Forlì and Medicean history. It was rumoured that Lorenzo was the instigator of Girolamo's murder. The most recent biographer of Caterina Sforza traces the whole series of events to Lorenzo's machinations. The evidence, however, amounts to nothing. In Florence, naturally, there was no regret for the man who had wrought such mischief to the State. The assassins wrote immediately to Lorenzo describing their deed as the vengeance for his brother's murder; they asked for his support, and later, when their schemes had failed, for shelter. Their petition received no answer. Even in their conversation with his agent at Forlì the assassins did not implicate Lorenzo, although they declared that they had acted not without the knowledge of the Pope. It was, indeed, assumed that Innocent VIII. wished to replace a Riario by a Cybò

dynasty, and that in such a wish Franceschetto's father-in-law would naturally concur. But Lorenzo had no high opinion of his son-in-law's capacity; for his sake he would never have set all Romagna ablaze, and incurred the certain hostility of the Sforza.

Whatever were Lorenzo's faults, he was not vindictive; Girolamo was no longer a source of danger; with Caterina, who was the leading spirit, he had established friendly relations. The small weak state of Forlì and Imola was fully in accordance with his political traditions. In conversation with the Ferrarese ambassador Lorenzo expressed the wish that Forlì might be left to its own peculiar lords, and not annexed by any of the greater powers. The Duke of Milan, he added, would be the least objectionable, because he would probably grant it as a fief to one of his barons; the Church, however, had long been hostile to its baronage, and would never loose its hold of what it had once seized; the government of the Church was so gentle that it was dangerous to those who were its neighbours. To this subject he kept returning, saying that before long the Church would be more to be feared than Venice, and that this in the Barons' War had alone induced him to support Ferrante. Thus Lorenzo fully approved of the restoration of Caterina Sforza and her son. Florentine troops were, indeed, marched across the Apennines, but their only action was to recover the hamlet of Piancaldoli which Girolamo had wrested from the Republic. Even this almost produced a rupture with Ludovico Moro; how much more an attempt to secure Imola and Forlì for the Cybò! On the subject

of Piancaldoli the Florentines stood firm. Ludovico, said Pandolfino, Lorenzo's leading *confidant* at this period, treated them as though they were his subjects; but Florence would not suffer herself to be bullied like a Cremona or a Pavia.

In May a second tragedy occurred which affected Florence yet more closely. Lorenzo had himself promoted a marriage between Galeotto Manfredi, lord of Faenza, and Francesca, daughter of Giovanni Bentivoglio. The marriage was not happy. Galeotto was faithless, Francesca passionate and jealous. The wife's bravos surprised the husband by her bedside, Galeotto fought fiercely for his life, and Francesca is said to have leapt from her bed and, seizing a sword, to have dealt the fatal blow. Bentivoglio hastened to Faenza with a Milanese Commissary and occupied the town. Upon this the men of the Val Lamone marched upon Faenza, proclaiming the sovereignty of the young Astorre and the Protectorate of Florence. The Milanese Commissary was killed, Bentivoglio barely saved his life, and was handed over a prisoner to the Florentine troops. Astorre was then peaceably installed in his father's place, while Giovanni Bentivoglio, after a personal interview with Lorenzo, was released. Ill-feeling naturally remained, and for a time Lorenzo was considered not safe at Poggio a Caiano from a Bolognese raid. But the object was secured. Faenza gave Florence a firm foothold in Romagna, and the shortest route was safe in the charge of the valiant peasants of the Val Lamone.

This was not the last of Lorenzo's successes. Pe-

rugia was disgraced by the sanguinary faction fights of its two chief families, the Oddi and Baglioni. To the latter Lorenzo had always given his support, and in 1488 they obtained a momentary superiority by banishing their rivals. This arrangement Lorenzo persuaded Innocent to make permanent. The Baglioni became the virtual rulers of the chief town of Umbria by Lorenzo's favour, and under the nominal suzerainty of the Pope. Thus from the headland of Piombino, whose sovereign Lorenzo had saved from the schemes of Sixtus IV. and of Franceschetto Cybò, the ring of small buffer states, which owed their existence to his intervention, stretched through Siena to Città di Castello and Perugia, and thence to Rimini, Forlì, Faenza, and Imola. The Bentivoglio, notwithstanding a temporary cloud, must needs be hand in glove with the Medici, while a little farther the house of Este acknowledged its obligations to Lorenzo's aid. The Pope united by marriage to the Medici was now under Lorenzo's control, for the influence of Giuliano della Rovere had waned. Giovanni de' Medici had obtained the Cardinalate, and within a few years would be old enough to press Medicean interests in the Consistory. A yet more efficacious lever on the Pope was the close alliance with the Orsini of Pitigliano and Bracciano. Niccolò, who in days to come was to organise Venetian resistance to the French, and Virginio and Paolo Orsini were in Florentine service. In the Orsini, the Vitelli, the Baglioni, Lorenzo was monopolising the mercenary arms of Central Italy, those very chiefs by whose aid Cæsar Borgia won his future victories,

while the boy lordlets of Romagna were all attached to him by ties of gratitude.

Yet for all his pains and his successes Lorenzo had little peace. Alfonso of Naples was the disturbing cause. He, perhaps rightly, thought that his kingdom could only have due weight in Italy if absolutism were consistent, if baronial independence were crushed out, and Papal interference excluded. The cruel extermination of the rebel barons was in itself a breach of Ferrante's treaty obligations towards the Pope. But the King did not stop at this. He murdered the Papal governor and garrison, under whose protection Aquila had been placed, and reduced the stubborn town to complete submission. The Neapolitan benefices he lavished on his creatures, regardless of Papal presentation or confirmation. The tribute was repudiated, the King alleging that he had never personally acknowledged the treaty, that he had spent so much upon the Pope that he would not and could not pay. For five years and more the quarrel dragged its weary course, and the burden of mediation fell mainly on Lorenzo. It is in this period that his prudence, his patience, his genuine love of peace, his Italian patriotism are most clearly to be traced. There were times when his temper would give way. He once expressed the wish that his thankless task were over, that the King of France were sovereign of all Italy. At another moment he threatened to bury himself in some rustic haunt where no sound of politics could reach his ears. Yet he negotiated untiringly between the enemies, imploring Ferrante to honourably execute the condi-

LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

A later composition from contemporary materials by Giorgio Vasari.
In the Uffizi Gallery.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

tions, advising the Pope to accept a compromise. The affairs of the barons, he would urge, had gone too far for remedy; it was bootless to cry over spilt milk; let the Pope accept a moderate tribute, let Ferrante make satisfactory engagements as to the benefices; why should he hesitate to make promises which he need not keep? why not let Pope and King wink at each other, as Pope and King had winked for generations. Above all, from his own experience, he warned the Pope against an interdict. He anticipated Machiavelli's view of the worthlessness of an unarmed prophet. An interdict was useless without arms, and for arms Italy was not prepared, and least of all the Papal States with subjects disaffected and cardinals divided.

Innocent VIII. was at once weak and obstinate, rash and cowardly, accepting advice on all sides and acting upon none. At one moment he pronounced an interdict, at another he declared the kingdom forfeited, and then, as Trivulzio expressed it, he would run like a rabbit to his hole. Alfonso on the other hand lined the Tronto with his troops, and stimulated revolt in the Papal town of Ascoli.

By Lorenzo's success or ill-success in this last period of his career his ability in the diplomatic department of statecraft must be tested. It is necessary to realise the conditions which limited his action. He was, indeed, at this time the controlling power in Florence, yet this control was far from automatic. Apart from the professional diplomatists, the Vespucci, the Lanfredini, the Pandolfini, who were mostly devoted to Lorenzo and spent their lives

freely in his service, there was not much intelligent heed of foreign politics in Florence. The Florentines at large in this resembled the modern English. They were in respect of *la haute politique* at once ignorant and indifferent, yet they had their pretensions and their prejudices. The assertion that a democracy is the best critic of foreign policy was belied in the case of the statesman who first made it, and has never yet received its proof. Nothing at Florence was so likely to upset a ruling house, as a supposed mistake in international relations. It cannot be too often repeated that Medicean supremacy at home rested upon influence abroad. Thus Lorenzo was always hampered by the consideration of the effects which his foreign policy would have in Florence. He must needs be striving for two objects: the peace of Italy, which he genuinely desired and which entailed the exclusion of the foreigner, and the increase of his popularity at home as the reflex of additional respect abroad. Thus it was possible, as in the Ferrarese War, the Barons' War, and the Papal-Neapolitan quarrel, to obtain to the full his primary object, the cessation or avoidance of war, and yet he might fail in his secondary object, because the hostile powers turned their backs upon the mediator, and so deprived him of the credit of the peace.

Florentine ignorance could not always realise Lorenzo's aims, nor appreciate his virtual success; its prejudice would thwart or modify his action. The fundamental principle which he had inherited was the maintenance of the Triple Alliance at all costs.

The Florentine people hated Naples, and had scant respect for Milan. The *raison d'être* of the Milanese-Neapolitan alliance had been, from the days of Filippo Maria Visconti and Alfonso the Magnanimous, the exclusion of France from the peninsula. The Florentines, partly from sentiment, partly from material interests, were always prepared to bid France God-speed in her designs on Italy. That this tradition was still alive is proved by the attitude, not only of Savonarola and his party, which was distinctly popular, but by that of statesmen trained in the Medicean School who ought to have known better, but who surrendered their convictions to hatred for the later Medici, or to love of the democratic vote.

To the hereditary lesson Lorenzo added his own dearly bought experience that the Pope's hostility was as perilous as his favour was profitable. In this he was at accord with Florentine feeling. As the leader of the Tuscan Parte Guelfa, Florence naturally followed the lead of the Papacy with regard to stranger powers. Yet as an autonomous republic she properly resented its interference with herself. Thus in the fourteenth century she had led the fight against Gregory XI., thus she had cordially supported Lorenzo against Sixtus IV., and thus though sacrificing Savonarola to Alexander VI. she was to draw a line beyond which Papal pretensions must not pass. It is certain that, had Lorenzo pursued his tentative support of the schismatic Zuccalmaglio, the city would have thwarted his schemes, even as she thwarted the Council held in her territory of Pisa

in 1409, and as she was to thwart that imposed upon her by Louis XII. in 1511.

With regard to Venice, the feelings of the town and the despot flowed together, though their springs were separate. There was a natural jealousy between the commercial and the manufacturing town, between the carrying trade and the trade which would like to carry, between the Liverpool and the Manchester of Italy. It was a literary commonplace to compare the merits of Venice and Florence, just as it had been to contrast Athens with Sparta, Carthage with Rome. Yet there was much deep-lying sympathy. Venice had been at once the natural and traditional ally of Florence against the aggressions of Milan and Naples; they were both Guelfic, both republics. Cosimo's change of policy had been unpopular in Florence, and it is at least probable that some of the unpopularity survived. It is significant that on the fall of Lorenzo's son the anti-Medicean party turned to Venice and regrafted her republican constitution from the Venetian stock; the Medicean despotism was a corruption, a phylloxera, only to be exterminated by a replanting of the native vine. The resentment of Venice against the Medici, overcome only for a moment in the war against Sixtus, was a constant cause of difficulty. Even more active than this resentment was the ambition to extend her possessions in the Adriatic at the expense of Naples, which ran counter to the principles of Lorenzo's policy. Could he have relied on the impartial support of Venice, the Papal-Neapolitan dispute could scarcely have caused a moment's difficulty. But

Venice, as Lorenzo's ambassador candidly confessed, hated him more intensely than Satan hates the Cross. Lorenzo's son, indeed, fled to Venice, chased from Florence by the restless oligarchy, even as Cosimo had been chased by the Albizzi. But the Venetians had learnt their lesson, they advised the exile not to return, because they thought his restoration certain if return he did.

Another limitation to Lorenzo's diplomacy was the lack of military power. He could never effectively threaten, his advice had no material support, his warnings had no sanction. In earlier days, the Medici had compensated for military by financial resources; they had played the part, which England was to play hereafter, of the friendly paymaster. But with the falling fortunes of Lorenzo this was less seldom possible; he would at times rather "a borrower than a lender be." When the treaty between the Pope and Naples, in which Lorenzo had no part, had been completed, he begged that the payment due from Ferrante to the Pope might be effected through his bank. He no longer found the capital for political speculations, but was content to take a commission on the transfer. Florence thus experienced all the difficulties of a weak neutral State. If she took no side she might easily become the victim of the conqueror. This was to happen in 1512, and it might have happened now but for Lorenzo's caution. Were Naples to conquer the Pope the kingdom might once more extend its power to Tuscany. A side therefore must be taken, and yet the State must not be too far committed; the system of bal-

ance must be preserved not by irresolute action, but by active intervention.

If these limitations be considered, it is small wonder that Lorenzo's reputation was enhanced by the results of these anxious years. He supported the Pope in resistance to humiliating submission, and yet prevented him from straining his spiritual powers. He stayed Ferrante from taking advantage of his military superiority, he checked Ludovico from yet further embroiling an intricate situation. Even the irreconcilable hostility between Alfonso and Ludovico was temporarily allayed, to break out afresh after Lorenzo's death. The Triple Alliance was preserved, and yet the entire favour of the Pope was won. In spite of rivalry the mediation of Venice was accepted, and this made the most dangerous power in Italy a guarantor of peace. All important was it that Lorenzo played the part of a good Italian. He had himself in his war against Naples and the Pope gone dangerously near to French intervention. His hereditary connection with the French Court was so close, his financial prosperity was so dependent on French favour, that it required consummate tact not to commit himself, and his State, too far in furthering the Italian ambitions of the Crown, on of the two great royal houses of Anjou and Orleans. Yet it was he that mainly stayed the flood for eight years more, proving to Ferrante that the danger was real, and enforcing the necessity of moderation, imploring the Pope to sacrifice indignation and immediate interest to the good of Italy.

Rightly foreseeing that the storm might break

upon Italy not only from the north-west but from the north-east Lorenzo established intimate relations with the Court of Frederick III. and Maximilian. He won the friendship of the indispensable Councillor of the Emperor and the King of the Romans, Raymond Perault, supporting him against the hostile reception with which he always met at Rome, pressing his cause upon the Pope. Before long reports flowed as regularly from Germany as from France. Lorenzo became an authority upon German politics. It seemed not improbable that, as he had been the mediator in Italy, so he might be in Europe. If, as seemed too likely, the two great rival powers of France and Germany were to make Italy the field of their trial of strength, it was at all events a safeguard that an Italian ruler should understand and temper their actions.

Lorenzo's task would have been easier had he felt sure of Ludovico's sympathy. But there was no good feeling between the two rulers since the conquest of Sarzana; Ludovico would readily undermine his influence with Pope or King. At length, notwithstanding the hostility between the Medici and Venice, Lorenzo thought it well that the republic should offer her mediation to the Pope, in return for which Innocent would reconcile her to the Austrian duke, for Lorenzo felt that the petty war upon the north-eastern frontier of Italy was becoming dangerous. A yet greater danger was the intervention of France or Spain. Both Kings were hostile to Ferrante, and Innocent vowed that if he could not get redress in Italy, he would look abroad, he would even head

another Babylonian exile. Lorenzo's alarm is proved by the prophetic lines written to his ambassador in Rome in July 1489: "I dislike these Ultramontanes and barbarians beginning to interfere in Italy. We are so disunited and so deceitful that I believe that nothing but shame and loss would be our lot, recent experience may serve to foretell the future." Foreign intervention had been so far deferred by the war of Ferdinand and Isabella against the Moors, by Maximilian's campaign against Hungary, and by the conflict of the French Crown with the Dukes of Orleans and Brittany. In September 1489, however, Breton resistance was broken by the defeat at Saint Aubin, the Duke soon afterwards died, Orleans was reconciled with the Crown, and the French King secured the obedience of the last great fief by his marriage with Anne of Brittany. France was now united, while not a power in Italy could rely on the friendship of any other. The Pope's favour was of value to the Crown of France, for a double dispensation was needed to release Charles from his betrothal to Maximilian's daughter, and to release Anne from her marriage by proxy to Maximilian, in addition to which the King and his bride were within the prohibited degrees. This new danger contributed to Ferrante's tardy desire for peace which was hurriedly concluded early in 1492. He consented to pay the Papal tribute, but as the price of the investiture of his son and grandson. Lorenzo on whom the burden of the negotiations had fallen was ill-pleased at this conclusion. His object had been a general Italian league which should show

a united front to foreigners. He feared that the separate Papal-Neapolitan alliance would be answered by a Milanese-Venetian league. Yet anything was better than the continuance of this dangerous quarrel. As a guarantee of peace the Pope's granddaughter was married to the Marquis of Gerace, a bastard of Alfonso.

If one Neapolitan wedding closed this tedious conflict, another was the prelude of trouble to Lorenzo and his dynasty, and, indeed, to all posterity. The marriage of Isabella of Naples with her cousin Gian Galeazzo Sforza in 1489 was intended to bind yet more closely the interests of the two monarchies. At the festival Lorenzo's heir had been the most honoured guest. It might seem that the Triple Alliance had been sealed anew. But in January, 1491, Ludovico Moro married Beatrice d'Este. The two young wives were first cousins and therefore none the friendlier. Both were handsome, talented, and ambitious. Beatrice had the advantage of being a younger woman, and of having an elder husband, who was as docile as he was clever. In her hands lay the practical power, and she lorded it over the rightful Duchess, who was equally resolved to assert her claims. Milan was fast becoming divided between two factions. Trivulzio, who sympathised with the young Duke, had already been driven into Neapolitan service. Alfonso longed to employ the troops massed upon the Tronto in his son-in-law's behalf.

For such an emergency Ludovico had long prepared. He was threatened by Naples, by Orleans,

by Maximilian, and he sought protection in the Crown of France. In April, 1490, he made a treaty with Charles VIII. which secured for his nephew the investiture of Genoa. This however was not enough, for an influential party in Milan was begging both the King and the Duke of Orleans to free them from Ludovico, while the usurper feared a league of Naples, the Papacy, and Florence, the very combination which two years later drove him definitely to call the French to Italy. It was now certain that war between Charles and Maximilian could not be avoided. Ludovico could persuade the King that Milan also was threatened by Maximilian, and that a strong government was a protection to French interests, while its alliance with Maximilian would be dangerous to France. He could prove that the conquest of Naples for the Crown was more profitable than that of Milan for the still disaffected house of Orleans. France moreover was sensibly displeased at the investiture of Ferrante by the Pope; her ambassador at Rome had in vain protested. In January 1492 a French embassy visited Milan to discuss a treaty, and in March Ludovico sent envoys to confirm it, and to ascertain if he could rely on French assistance against the three Southern powers. At this moment the French King's agent Peron de Basche was on his way to Rome nominally to buy horses, but really to demand the investiture of Naples for Charles VIII. Up till now Lorenzo's Lyonese agent Sassetti had assured him of the certainty of peace; Anne of Beaujeu was determined to avoid intervention; French finances were unequal to a for-

eign war; ambassadors were going to England, to Flanders, to the Emperor, to Spain; Italy was in no one's thoughts. But at this moment the tone of his letters changed, he warned Lorenzo that trouble was in the air. This despatch Lorenzo never opened, for his own career was closed.

The mediator died before the crisis was concluded. Nevertheless it may be claimed that at his death all Italy was actually at peace. Between Milan and Naples the situation had improved, for Ferrante had concurred with Lorenzo in urging on Alfonso the necessity of forbearance. Even the French envoy was instructed to act on the advice which he might receive at Florence. A modern writer, not too friendly to Lorenzo, confesses that throughout this anxious period he was the only Italian prince who did his duty. His relations to France and to the Pope stood him in good stead. Yet in some respects they added to his difficulties. The correspondence with Louis XI. had grown yet more frequent as the old King neared his end; he was perpetually needing something which Lorenzo could supply. At one moment it was a big dog to guard his person, at another the bones of San Bernardino, or the ring of San Zenobius, or medals of the Virgin struck at Pisa, which were reported to relieve pain, or a doctor named "the Turk" who was skilled in the use of purgatives. The intimacy with the French Court did not cease with Charles VIII.'s accession. Lorenzo's especial friend Comines was, indeed, for a time out of favour and in prison, and complained loudly of his treatment by the Medici

bank. In 1491, however, he had recovered his lost ground, and Lorenzo instructed his agents to satisfy his demands. Meantime other French statesmen had been won. Lorenzo became the recognised intermediary between the Court and the Curia; his favour was the most certain means of winning a benefice. These services were not quite gratuitous. During his last years French money once more flowed freely through the Lyons bank, and Lorenzo begged, not without success, for French benefices for his little son. Thus Giovanni obtained the abbey of Font Doulce, and was promised the Archbishopric of Aix, until it was found that the Archbishop was not dead.

It was through Lorenzo's mediation that a negotiation, which was considered of the highest importance, was carried to a successful issue. The fugitive Prince Djem, brother of the Sultan Bajazet, had been handed over by the Hospitallers to the French Crown. Several princes coveted his possession. He could be used as a menace against the Sultan, whilst he was a lucrative guest, for Bajazet paid handsomely for his maintenance and retention. The King of Naples, the Soldan, the King of Hungary, the Pope, were all in the market. The main question, wrote Lorenzo's agent, was as to who would give the French regent, Anne of Beaujeu, the largest "drink" (*beveraggio*). By Lorenzo's aid the Pope became the purchaser. In the course of the discussion, in November, 1487, an Egyptian embassy arrived at Florence. The Soldan conferred the fullest privileges of trade upon

the Florentines, and sent as gifts to the Signoria and to Lorenzo, samples of the treasures and curiosities of Africa, striped tents and fine muslin, balsam and musk and civet, curious animals, sheep with huge tails and long hanging ears, and above all a giraffe which was led in pomp throughout the city, and exhibited to the inmates of the monastic institutions. The long-tailed sheep were acclimatised on Lorenzo's farm, but the giraffe became the most popular character in Florence. Its stable was in the Via Scala, and in winter, writes Tribaldo de' Rossi, it lived in a great mountain of litter, while fires were kept up, for it was much afraid of cold. Such a pleasant beast it was that all the boys would feed it, and it would take an apple from an urchin's hand. In January 1489 it died and was skinned, bewailed by all the town, for it was so beautiful an animal.

Not only did this giraffe figure repeatedly in contemporary art and literature but it played its part in politics. Anne of Beaujeu set her heart upon the creature, it was the beast in all the world which she most longed to see, and if Lorenzo wished anything done in France, she would do it with the best of will. She was almost beside herself, wrote Spinelli, at not receiving the giraffe. Unfortunately the poor beast was dead, but as late as 1490 Sassetti besought his partner to keep up the high reputation which he enjoyed in France, by sending armour, horses, birds, and dogs to the young King; could he not find a curious animal for Anne who could not get the giraffe out of her head?

Lorenzo had showed skill in gratifying the Soldan

without alienating the Sultan, for the two powers were at war; he had punctually informed the Porte of the arrival of the Egyptian embassy. Yet greater was his ability in following a purely Italian policy without offending France. The financial fortunes of the Medici and of Florence depended upon France, and yet Lorenzo thwarted all French schemes for intervention whether of the Crown, of Orleans, or Lorraine. Every French ambassador on his way to Rome was referred to Lorenzo, who, before his arrival, received a detailed character-sketch from Sassetti. Thus each ambassador could be cajoled or bribed according to his vanity or avarice, and each returned to France with the report that negotiations could safely be left in Lorenzo's hands. It was an expensive system, for all Italian envoys and agents concurred in the later report of Machiavelli that nothing could be done in France without plenty of money. But at least this secret-service money was wisely spent, if even at the expense of the interest on the funds. On the other hand it is possible that the presents, or the bribes, which the French envoys received, formed the chief motive for the frequency of embassies.

Pucci.

Gianfigliazzi.

Ludovico Sforza, and reverse.

CHAPTER VII.

Changes in the Constitution—Financial measures of the Medici—Party government at Florence—Civil and criminal justice—Despotic authority of Lorenzo, and its popularity.

1480–1492.

LORENZO during the misfortunes which followed his brother's murder learned to know his weakness and his strength. There was no reliance to be placed on the military resources of Florence, and henceforth he was far more cautious in his relations to foreign powers, avoiding possibilities of collision, and striving always to be the mediator of Italian peace. Plots might indeed be hatched in Florence against the irreconcilable foe Girolamo Riario, but never again was there open defiance of the spiritual powers of the Papacy or of the military resources of Naples.

On the other hand there was reason to be generally content with the strength of his position within the State. Florence had remained faithful through-

out a disastrous war which was by her enemies always represented as a private quarrel. Even Lorenzo's absence and the losses sustained by the terms of the peace provoked little more than mutterings. He was emboldened to push his advantage home, to gain a more complete control over the executive, and, above all, to gather into his hands the pecuniary resources of the State.

Lorenzo made immediate use of his diplomatic success at Naples to secure his position within the city. Foreign and home politics once more reacted on each other. His supremacy had been in no little danger, he determined to make it safe for ever. The changes which were introduced amounted to little less than revolution. Hitherto the appointment of Accoppiatori, or Board of Selection, had given the governing party much control over the Signoria, and when a recalcitrant gonfalonier, such as Bardo Corsi, had introduced measures hostile to its interests, his audacity entailed exclusion from public life. The most important Council, however, that of the Hundred, had been by no means invariably submissive. Often it had passed the governmental measures with reluctance, while some, and these the most important, it had rejected. Utilised by the Medici to reduce the two larger and more popular Councils to insignificance the Hundred had felt its strength, and checked the growth of the absolutist system.

The well-known track was at first followed. A bill for the creation of a Balìa was proposed by the Signoria and pushed through the Colleges and the three Councils. It was noticeable that no Parla-

mento was summoned by the great bell, to give popular sanction to the temporary suspension of the constitution. Popular feeling was still excited; it may have been thought dangerous to provide it with a vent, though no government had yet found reason to dread these well-watched gatherings. The measures which were taken deserve description in some detail, because they form the one great constitutional change of Lorenzo's period, and the Council of Seventy which was their chief result became the characteristic and permanent feature of the Medicean government. The Seventy fell soon after Lorenzo's death, to be revived on the Medicean restoration.

The Signoria was authorised to elect thirty persons, and in conjunction with these to nominate a further body of two hundred and ten members, qualified for office, free of debt to the State, and of at least thirty years of age. The object of this new Council or Balìa was twofold. In conjunction with the Thirty, the Signoria, and the Colleges, it was to undertake in November the scrutiny of all names to be placed in the boxes belonging to the various offices of State. For this purpose they were to associate with themselves a further body of forty-eight, to be elected in that month. To this body were added the Signoria and Colleges for November, or for future months, if the scrutiny should outlast December. This Council, therefore, was a committee to consider the qualifications of all persons willing or able to take office, and to place their names in the boxes of the offices for which they respectively seemed qualified. For each sitting a quorum

of two-thirds was necessary, and each vote must be carried by a majority of two-thirds.

In this proposal there was little that can be called tyrannical. The electoral committee was large, consisting of three hundred and sixty-two members in a town of about ninety thousand souls. The Lesser Arts had their constitutional representation of one-fourth, while the due proportion was accorded to the four districts, a check upon private influence which varied in the several quarters of the town. Care was moreover taken that family interests should not predominate. To the thirty and the two hundred and ten together no more than three members of the same family were admitted. Thus at least eighty Florentine houses must be represented, apart from those which had members sitting in the Signoria and the Colleges. In the case of the two hundred and ten there was indeed a provision that the restriction as to number and age should not apply to two families to be hereafter named. It has been assumed that one of these must be the Medici. In the list of the two hundred and ten there are, indeed, three Medici all distantly related. But a despotism must have weak foundations if it rests on a fourth cousin's vote in a body of three hundred and sixty-two members. Such provisions were common to Venice, and the later republican government of Florence. Their object was to give an opening to a very limited number of young men of peculiar promise without excluding the elder members of their families. It must be clearly understood that a family meant not a household, but

the group of households bearing a common name, and recognising relationship. If the Medici could rely on a two-thirds majority in a body of this size, drawn from all quarters of Florence, the basis of their power must have been wide indeed.

The functions of this Balìa were by no means to lie dormant until their electoral duties began in the following November. In the interval the existing Signorias and Colleges, the thirty and two hundred and ten, that is, a body of two hundred and seventy-seven members formed a committee of government and reform. This possessed, until the end of June, the full authority which constitutionally belonged to the three Councils, with power to delegate such authority to a smaller number. The objects particularly mentioned in the Bill were the revision of the State debt, the raising of taxes to meet the interest thereon, and the relief and reorganisation of the county districts desolated and disordered by the war. The citizens would thus be able to give their full attention to their private interests, when the general election of November had been completed.

Of the power of delegation full use was made within a week. The Signoria on April 16th declared that in the desire to reap the full fruits of the authority granted to the Consiglio Maggiore or Balìa, it had after consultation with a large number of experienced citizens determined to create a permanent Council of seventy members. It is not stated that this measure was directly carried by the Balìa, although this must necessarily have been the case. There is a suggestion, moreover, that the

usual system of the Pratica was adopted, that is, that the Council was reinforced by a meeting of the more important citizens. This would lead to the conclusion that the creation of this all-important Medicean council was carried by a large and fairly representative body. That individuals ill-affected to the Medici were not excluded is proved by Rinuccini's confession that he was a member of the two hundred and ten.

The actual selection of the Seventy was left to safer hands, for the remaining forty members were chosen by the thirty originally nominated by the Signoria. Among these forty, however, there must not be more than one member of a family, and none if there were more than one in the thirty. Thus the Seventy must represent at least forty families. Each member of the forty must be at least forty years of age. Three-fourths of these were taken from the Greater Arts, and these must have been drawn for the office of Gonfalonier of Justice. One who owed arrears of taxes might be elected, and might give advice; he could not however vote until he had cleared his debt. The due proportion of the Lesser Arts was preserved so that among the Seventy there were seventeen or eighteen members of the tradesmen guilds. This Council did not at once supersede the Consiglio Maggiore, which continued to pass measures until the end of June, and began its electoral duties in November. Nevertheless, its more important functions were at once transferred. Moreover, whereas the Consiglio Maggiore was a committee of government purely temporary,

the Seventy formed a standing Council, for although a limit of five years was assigned to this new branch of the constitution, it was intended to be permanent, and its members sat for life. An important feature of this Council was that vacancies were filled by co-optation. The new member was elected within six months in a quorum of two-thirds, and by a majority of at least two-thirds. It was quite possible that several candidates might obtain this proportion of the votes, for in Florence the methods of election differed substantially from those of modern times. We only vote for those whom we definitely like; the more good-natured Florentines voted for all whom they did not definitely dislike. Each name was proposed in turn, and the votes were given by ballot, but of those candidates who had obtained the requisite two-thirds he who had the majority was declared elected.

In Italy numbers never exactly represented facts. The Seventy was rarely complete, for its members lost their privilege while holding the numerous appointments without the town. On the other hand the Gonfalonier had the right of joining in its deliberations. But provision was made for a yet more important addition. Any Gonfalonier of Justice who had shown conspicuous talent might within a month of the expiration of his office be elected as an additional member, provided that the maximum number of seats allotted to a family were not exceeded. This, it was stated in the Bill, was intended to hold out encouragement to the display of patriotism and energy; it regulated a practice already ex-

isting in the Hundred where citizens who had been drawn, or had served, as Gonfaloniers, had voted, although not members of the Council.

The functions of the Seventy were in the highest degree important. In the first place they were the electors to the chief magistracy. The Consiglio Maggiore retained its rights for the coming election in the majority of cases. But the Seventy from the month of May stepped into the place of the Accoppiatori for the election of the Signoria. For this purpose it was divided into two bodies of thirty-five, each of which acted for a year, that is for six elections. If the thirty-five were incomplete, they were recruited from the other thirty-five, while the additional members were distributed as evenly as might be. Meanwhile the original thirty was empowered to draft rules for the examination of candidates' qualifications, and the number of names to be placed in each box. Vested interests were respected so far as this, that whereas obnoxious names might be removed from the boxes, no new names should at present be added. The examination of the names proposed for the Signoria must take place two days before the appointed period of election, and the drawing was then made on the regular day. This point was of importance, for it was a guarantee that no known enemy of the governmental party could be drawn, unless, indeed, he could change his politics at two days' notice. In the fifteenth century, however, politicians were less obedient to command, or less easily convinced, than in the more rapid nineteenth.

The appointment of the chief magistracy was by no means the sum total of the power of the Council over the Executive. Two new committees of government were formed whose members the Seventy selected from their own number. The Committee of Eight, the Otto di Pratica, supervised all affairs of State, all matters of foreign policy; it decided upon the number of troops which the State should at any time maintain. Thus it trenched on the functions of the Ten of War, which was not however a standing committee, being only appointed in time of war. Equally important to the governing party was the Committee of Twelve, which regulated the affairs of the State debt, the Admiralty Board, and the Board of Trade. In its hands in fact lay the regulation of the finance and commerce of the State. To each member was assigned a separate department, and he brought his reports before his colleagues.

These two committees might well have become too powerful for the Seventy had they been more permanent. Their office was however limited to six months, and the outgoing members were not re-eligible. Thus the whole of the Seventy very rapidly acquired experience in these two important branches of the executive, and became eminently fitted for a deliberative body which should not merely sanction proposals laid before it by the executive, but should take a responsible share in their consideration. The relations between the two committees, the Signoria, and the Seventy were extremely close. The Signoria was bound to lay

before the Eight and the Twelve any matter which belonged to their department; in the case of the Eight every despatch, every ambassador, was referred to it. Either committee might summon to its deliberations any citizens of experience whom it might be thought desirable to consult, a provision of doubtful advantage as weakening the sense of responsibility in the responsible magistracy, which was always a flaw in the Florentine system. After deliberation either committee might summon the Seventy to the Palace, and there the matter was decided and the Signoria authorised to give effect to the decision. Every measure which required the consent of the older Councils, every measure relating to the conduct of government, to elections or taxes must be discussed and passed by a two-thirds majority in a quorum of two-thirds, before it could be brought before the Signoria and Colleges, or any other magistracy. Ambassadors and Commissaries, the Ten of War, and the Eight of Watch and Ward continued to be appointed in the ordinary manner, for the usual period, and with the usual powers. Their commissions were however given to them by the Eight and their salaries fixed by the same body in conjunction with the Signoria and the Thirty-five.

It is sometimes erroneously stated that the three old Councils were abolished on the creation of the Seventy. Nothing is farther from the truth. Their action was indeed, as often before, suspended during the term of legislative office granted to the Balìa, that is from April to June, 1480. Florence was in

many respects conservative. It would have been imprudent and unpopular to abolish bodies, membership of which gave a feeling of importance to many a worthy citizen. All men take pleasure in being elected by their fellow men to offices however perfunctory or onerous. When the representative system has been played out for all practical purposes of government, elections will still survive for personal gratification. At Florence, above all, there was a mania for office. The Balìa, writes Cambi, protracted the elections, and the citizens grovelled like slaves before the government in their passion for place. The three older Councils still retained their legislative functions. Many, indeed, of the matters which came before them were bills proposed in the name of private persons or relating to private persons, and with these the Seventy had no concern. The distinction between executive and legislative business is often hard to draw, and doubtless the Seventy frequently drew the imaginary line in its own favour. But every legislative act henceforth must, after approval by the Signoria, Colleges, and Seventy, and after examination by a committee of the Colleges and Conservators of the Laws, be laid before the three older Councils. Nor was this a mere form, for an examination of the registers proves the minorities to be often considerable, and it may well be doubtful if the requisite majority of two-thirds was always obtained in every Council. The composition of the Councils of the People and the Commune remained unaltered, while that of the Hundred was restored as it existed previous to the

changes of 1471 ; it voted however in future after and not before the older Councils.

This fundamental change in the Florentine constitution has generally been ascribed to Lorenzo's ambition for a practical absolutism. The method of election did indeed for the time being give him the control of the executive, but the effect of the measure was rather to remove actual danger than to concede positive power. The large quorum, and the large majority required were serious checks upon absolute authority. It was, indeed, rather a party than a personal measure. Lorenzo, it is true, learned to use it for his personal ends, because he was an incomparable party chief, and could make the party machinery his own. Nor is it just to attribute solely personal or party ends to those who elaborated this new scheme of government. The war had proved conclusively, if proof were needed, the inefficiency of the existing system. The Ten of War could not altogether correct the evils of a shifting executive, nor supply the lack of an experienced deliberative body, which would give weight to the resolutions of those who were professionally responsible for the conduct of affairs. The institution of the Seventy and its committees was a notable experiment. It was recruited from those who had official experience, which within the body was unceasingly increased. It strengthened, or should have strengthened, the written side of the constitution as opposed to the informal side. Official position was given to those who had privately, and therefore less effectively, pulled the wires of government. The neces-

magistracy, carefully selected by the Seventy from men of high position in the Medicean party. Their duties were to revive the prosperity of Pisa, and to fortify Leghorn and Sarzana against the Genoese.

If the new Constitution seemed working smoothly it needed constant care. Should disaffection appear in the executive it might be as dangerous as ever to Lorenzo. It was thought necessary to stifle every symptom of independence. Much stir was made in Florence by Lorenzo's summary action in the case of Nero Cambi whom he thought to have used his powers too freely. Cambi, as Gonfalonier of Justice, had punished by exclusion from office for three years several Gonfaloniers of Companies who had been absent without leave. The Signoria had been unanimous, but Lorenzo had not been consulted; he insisted on a reversal of the sentence. This was properly refused, but for all this the Gonfaloniers of the Companies were reinstated, and their punishment imposed on Cambi. No detail can perhaps better illustrate the practical absolutism of Lorenzo.

The Seventy became thoroughly identified with the Medicean system, falling with its fall, and reappearing on its restoration. Yet Lorenzo was not thoroughly satisfied with its working. So large a body, whose members sat practically for life, might easily get out of hand. He therefore deprived it of the function through which it might become most dangerous. The election of the Signoria was in 1490 again confined to a committee of Accoppiatori, while to a Balìa of seventeen was given full power to introduce reforms in elections, taxation, and the ad-

ministration of the State debt. Of this board Lorenzo himself was one. It is said that he contemplated being made Gonfalonier for life, as soon as he reached the age of forty five. There is no evidence but hearsay for this determination, but it is not improbable. It would have given a constitutional sanction to his unofficial position, it would have secured him against a *coup d'état*. He was never really safe from the action of a headstrong Gonfalonier. Nor is it necessary to assume that his views were entirely selfish. It may well have been thought that the State needed some more permanent expression of its unity, some riper experience to guide its chief magistracy. The Venetian constitution was a model which reform was always inclined to follow. Lorenzo would have been a Doge with all the added hereditary influence of his house. The life gonfalonierate would not have increased the monarchical character of his government, for it would have been subjected to checks more difficult to brush aside. It would, however, have made the wheels of state run more smoothly. In the trouble ascribed to the weak executive of the republic, a scheme for a life gonfalonierate was an accusation brought against Savonarola, and the plan was a little later realised by the election of Piero Soderini. This fundamental change of the constitution was highly popular with the bulk of the people; the oligarchs alone disliked it, feeling that they were deprived for ever of the highest office of the State.

Lorenzo died before he could give perfection to his ideas of government. The main actual result of

the Balìa of seventeen was a reform in the lower denominations of the coinage. The Florentine *quattrini* were hardly to be distinguished from small foreign coins of similar appearance but varying value. Thus the old black *quattrini* were called in, and white coins with two ounces of silver to the pound of copper issued, their value being one-fifth greater. It was ordered that all payments to the State must be made in this new coinage. But the government threw back upon the market black *quattrini*, paying, that is, with the old and receiving with the new. No act of Lorenzo's government caused greater dissatisfaction among the people than this paltry swindle, and the first measure which the masses forced upon the new republican government on Piero's fall was the withdrawal of the white farthings. On the other hand the Seventeen must be credited with the removal of the cruel prohibition of manufactures, by which the jealous capital starved the industry of the old county of Florence.

The financial question was with Lorenzo, as with all rulers of the fifteenth century, the essential difficulty. He had, unlike his father and his grandfather, been brought up to politics rather than to finance. In the enlarged political area in which the princely position of the Medici had placed them, it was impossible that the head of the family should make the superintendence of his counting-houses his first business; it was impossible that the profits of banking, however large, should meet the personal and public expenditure of a modern prince. If the Medici were to fight and negotiate and make

display by the side of the rulers of Milan and Naples, they, as the Aragonese and the Sforza, must be able to drain the resources of their subjects. This was all the more necessary inasmuch as for generations past the *rôle* of Florence had been to subsidise rather than to fight, it was the penalty which she had paid for the extinction of her aristocracy. If therefore modern readers are shocked or delighted at the sums which the Medici extorted from the citizens who were in easy circumstances, they must in justice read in parallel columns the criticisms of Philippe de Comines on the oppressive taxation of Ludovico Sforza, and the all-embracing monopolies of Ferrante of Naples.

It must be remembered also that in Florence, in the class on which the burden of taxation chiefly fell, profits were very rapid and very high, whereas everyday life was simple and the necessaries of such life were cheap. That the richer families retained a substantial surplus is proved by the furniture, the clothing, the jewelry, the portrait commissions, the liberal expenditure on the lesser arts, the extravagance of wedding feasts and funeral consolations throughout this period. Even in modern times when the vast growth of population has decreased for the individual the expense of government, the clamour would be loud if Imperial taxes, probate and legacy duty, indirect taxation, poor rate, district rate, and Thames Valley drainage were levied together by the self-same authority. It is as true to-day as in the Medicean period that those, who contribute most, least like the objects to which their contribution is applied.

Taxation in Florence is an intricate subject. Yet it formed such a prominent feature in the Medicean despotism that it demands discussion at some length, a discussion which those readers who feel no interest in the matter may pass by. The question has a peculiarly modern bearing, for the two principles of Lorenzo's system were that the main burden of the State should be borne by land, and that taxation should be graduated. Direct taxation had grown out of the altered position of Florence as a sovereign state. She became involved in expensive wars, she could no longer rely on her citizen militia, but must adopt the ruinous practice of hiring troops. In addition to this, her widening relations to foreign powers and her growing territory entailed expenses in the diplomatic and administrative departments which could no longer be defrayed by the old municipal duties. The Medici, moreover, like other governments ancient and modern, within Italy and without, purchased support by the maintenance or creation of a large number of small offices, which according to the democratic principle of the constitution circulated rapidly, and therefore gave satisfaction or hope to all who would support the powers that be.

Of municipal duties or indirect taxation little need be said. They consisted of import and export dues, and, as was usual in Italy, of a monopoly of salt and duties on meal and wine. The three latter sources of revenue directly affected the lower classes, and were not, without danger, capable of substantial increase. Additional taxation must be found elsewhere. This was, as the English income tax,

regarded at first as extraordinary or war taxation, and then gradually became an established annual portion of the revenue. For long, indeed, this imposition was not regarded as a tax. It was rather a benevolence or forced loan levied on the wealthier citizens, or upon those whom the government disliked, and repaid with more or less regularity. As time went on the liability was extended to all citizens except the poorest. The character, however, of a loan was still preserved, and even in Lorenzo's age the taxes paid were usually credited at the Monte, that is, were regarded as capital invested in the funds and bearing interest.

This idea of a tax being a loan will explain the extreme leniency with which long arrears of unpaid taxes were regarded both in the State and in society. No one, probably, thought the worse of Alessandra Strozzi, the well-to-do mother of a wealthy exiled son, for an inveterate habit of arrears. It entailed, apparently, no unpleasant consequences except frequent visits from the collector. Exclusion from State offices was practically the only penalty for non-payment, and thus those who wished to lead a quiet life would adopt this convenient method of abstention from a political career.

Since a tax was regarded as a loan it is clear that the State debt would become unmanageable unless some system of liquidation were devised. Originally the product of the indirect taxes was applied to this purpose, but in course of time, and especially under the Medicean administration, it became common to apply a portion of the interest to the reduction of

the debt. Thus the six per cent stock would frequently yield a return of from four and a half per cent to three per cent. This was not unpopular with the masses who had no investments, and it is characteristic that the Ciompi had demanded the repayment of the debt in numerous instalments, these instalments to stand in place of interest. Florentines regarded the growth of the national debt with as much alarm as did our forefathers. "Either Florence will extinguish the funded debt" ran a saying of 1457, "or the debt will extinguish Florence."

The assessment of the forced loan was subject to the caprice of the government officials until the injustice became unbearable. Hence under the Albizzi a more equitable system was introduced in the celebrated Catasto or Assessment of 1427. The new principle consisted in a universal valuation to be renewed every five years. This was made, not by government officials, but by representative assessment committees for each district. Income was assessed under three schedules, the profits of trades and professions, the produce of land, and the interest of the funds. Income was capitalised at the rate of seven per cent, that is for every 7 florins of income a citizen was regarded as having 100 florins of capital, and the tax regularly consisted of one half per cent on this hypothetical capital. It resembled, however, rather a modern rate than a tax in this, that it was paid, not once a year, but as often as the exigencies of the State required. Thus it would be not unusual to pay in a single year one third of the estimated income. The severity of the system was

largely modified by the ample deductions made from the income thus capitalised. These included the rent or annual value of the dwelling-house, whether in town or country, an allowance of five per cent for maintenance and repair, bad debts, mortgages and settlements, while above all 200 florins of capital were deducted for each head in the family, a principle which might justly be adopted in the modern income tax. In Lorenzo's time the complaints against taxation came from those who had small families, in our own from those who have a quiverfull of what the Florentines termed "useless heads." The principle was that taxation should fall on "superabundance," on the surplus which remained when provision had been made for the necessaries of life. Florentine taxation was extraordinarily severe, but of this severity an exaggerated notion is often obtained by a failure to allow for the above deductions, and for the fact that the tax was generally a loan which bore interest.

After the fall of the Albizzi the wholesome provisions of the Catasto were neglected. Even in their time the reassessment was not punctually made, but under the Medici it fell from the hands of the representative committees into those of government officials. A rough and ready means of replacing periodical assessment was found in the "sgravo" or "aggravo," that is in a deduction or addition corresponding to diminution or increase of individual income. This gave a wide opening for abuse, and thus it was that Cosimo could ruin opponents and buy supporters.

The enemies or rivals of the Medici lay among the wealthier classes, while they relied for support upon the poorer. It was doubtless for this reason that under Cosimo the progressive income tax, already recommended by the Ciompi, originated, and was intermittently applied, until from 1480 Lorenzo made graduation the leading principle of his budgets. After the war, taxation was placed upon an altered basis. The taxation of personal property in a commercial town had given rise to discontent and fraud. It was impossible to arrive at a just estimate of profits. Merchants, as now, objected to exposing the condition of their credit. At one period when they were forced to produce their books, they kept a double set, double, indeed, but not duplicate. Then a system of oath was introduced, but the oath covered many a suppression of fact. On the other hand arbitrary assessment by officials was unsatisfactory to the payer. For these reasons Lorenzo resolved to throw the main burden upon the profits of land, which were easier to assess, and which afforded security for payment. The total of the tax was intended to realise one-tenth of the annual value of landed property, including the whole territory of Florence, and of all classes therein. For this purpose a fresh valuation was made. Deductions were allowed in respect of the dwelling-house and farm buildings, repairs and debts, and sometimes of manure and loss of stock. The principle of graduation was now regularly applied, the scale rising from seven per cent under fifty florins to twenty-two per cent above four hundred. With this, as had usually

been the case, was associated a poll-tax varying from about 1¼ to 4¼ florins. The produce of these poll-taxes was not however large, as they were only payable between eighteen and seventy years of age, and in the case of large young families payment was made in respect of one member only.

Of this new tax a third was levied in each month, so that in the case of the highest class nearly the whole nett income was paid within the year. This system was intended to last for seven years, but in 1482 it was found that landed property alone did not yield sufficient revenue. Thus to the "decima scalata" or "progressive tenth" was added an impost called the "dispiacente sgravato," which was a peculiar combination of the graduated tax on land and that on movables and professions. The two taxes, or rather instalments of them, were now usually paid in alternate months, but it is clear that the main burden of taxation still fell on land. All these taxes were placed to the payer's credit at the Monte, and part could be paid in such interest as the various stocks from time to time rendered. As towards the close of Lorenzo's life taxation diminished, the instalments were still regularly paid, but relief was given in the form of a general abatement, which reduced for instance the product of the "progressive tenth" from 25,000 to 15,000 florins.

It will be impossible to find a complete justification for the Medicean practice in the matter of taxation. The opponents of the Medici reproached them with refusing to establish a fundamental law which should regulate taxation on fixed principles;

they wished, it was said, to make taxation the stick wherewith to flog their enemies. Nay more—Cosimo, went the phrase, had plied the taxes as other tyrants wielded the dagger. This use of taxation for political ends was admitted even by their friends, who, however, urged with truth that the grosser abuses belonged to the earlier years of Cosimo's *régime*, before his power was fully established. We hear, in fact, in Lorenzo's time of no such cruel cases as that of the scholar Manetti whom Cosimo, or his party, deliberately ruined by taxation. It must be remembered that any government, which depends on votes or the equivalent of votes, will oppress by taxation those whose votes it can never hope to win. In the huge states of to-day a vindictive budget is directed against a class; there is little sting of personality. But in the city states of Italy or ancient Greece this seemed, at all events, to aim at a group of individuals, the personal opponents of the governing party. If rates be substituted for taxes this feeling of personal injustice is not extinct in modern Europe and America; whatever may be the facts it is no uncommon superstition that a prominent individual's politics occasionally form an element in his assessment. Taxation at Florence was at once imperial and municipal, and this fact must not be forgotten in estimating the burden that was borne. The local and personal knowledge which the assessing authorities possessed, added no doubt to the unfairness of assessment.

Yet another charge is brought against the Medici that they utilised taxation to win the neutrals, the

"mugwumps," the large class who stand aloof from party and every-day politics, and whose opposition or support will nevertheless determine a crisis. Such men could not be won by the hopes of office, nor disarmed by threats of exclusion. But low as is the ambition of this class, their standard of comfort is usually high. They were made to feel that if opposition was ruinous, neutrality was expensive, and party attachment profitable. It is still the classes, not which are most hostile, but which are least vocal, which bear the brunt of the burdens of the State. In the city state it seemed advisable that a citizen should be forced to take a side. At Florence as at Athens neutrality was a source of discomfort if not of danger, and was therefore offensive to the government. Had not even Solon fined the "mugwumps"?

It is due to Lorenzo to remember that he did attempt to introduce a principle into taxation, and one in fact which remained the basis of Tuscan taxation throughout all time. The graduated Tenth was in its origin established for seven years, an unusually long period, and it was supplemented rather than changed by the addition of the "dispiacente." Until after the Pazzi conspiracy Lorenzo had merely continued the hand-to-mouth financial policy of his father and grandfather; as soon as he is really absolute he seeks for a more scientific system. The regular application of graduation, and the obligation imposed upon the landowners to bear the chief portion of State burdens were undoubtedly popular. It was by the malcontent aristocracy that Lorenzo's budget was criticised as vindictive. The city lived

by its trade, and trade was to a great extent relieved at the expense of land. The Florentines had too much good sense to believe that the land belonged to the State, but they disliked the great landowners and justified the dislike by the tradition that they were dangerous to liberty. Had Lorenzo left the Dowry fund and the coinage alone he would have found little discontent among the poorer classes. It may also be observed in his defence that he heaped taxation upon the land during the very period that he was directing his main attention to the acquisition of large estates.

Lorenzo has been accused of using the treasury for private objects, of saving his house from bankruptcy by the appropriation of public revenue. The object, it was said, of his placing his creatures as secretaries in the Mercanzia, and more especially in the board which administered the State debt, was that he might use their balances. The liability, it is stated, was passed on from secretary to secretary in the hope that it would be brought home to none. These tales were undoubtedly believed, for on Piero's fall the first victims were Lorenzo's supposed agents in this dishonest system, and suspicion was increased by the fact that these agents' books could not be found; but a mob does not invariably know where to look. If Guicciardini may be believed, friends of the Medici admitted the fact but argued that the justification was the necessity, that the failure of the Medici would have been the ruin of the State. It must never be forgotten that the Medici were in fact a vast company embracing many families, whose

operations extended to all departments of commerce, and that to avoid bankruptcy was really a matter of public moment. Moreover, as the Medici had no official position there was no civil list, no official income to meet expenses incurred by them on occasions when they were virtually acting as representatives of the State. Lorenzo provided in great measure for the reception of foreign magnates and for expenditure of secret-service money. The lords of the Patrimony, the Lunigiana and Romagna, were in Lorenzo's pay. They were almost his and not the Republic's feudatories. Yet it was to the Republic's advantage as well as to Lorenzo's that they were subsidised. Every French Ambassador required a bribe. The very Regent, Anne of Beaujeu, was, as Lorenzo's Lyonese agents informed him, insatiable in the matter of *pourboires*.

There were, however, worthier objects of expense than these. The improvements at Pisa and in its neighbourhood were matters as much of state as of personal interest; even the art and literary collections of Lorenzo might be regarded as a great national museum which did all Florence honour, and served as a school for her artists and her men of letters. The time was fast approaching when it would be almost impossible to keep the private income and the public revenues distinct. They were the more easily merged since, as the Florentine merchant was becoming a prince, the princes of other states, of England, France, Naples, and Milan, were becoming merchants, trading with governmental capital. Questionable as were Lorenzo's financial

methods it was admitted that he was free from the rapacity which stained the princely houses, and that the hands of the leaders of the party were comparatively clean.

Modern writers in treating of Medicean taxation have held up their pious hands in horror, forgetting that this subject of all others cannot be isolated from its relations to the age. The taxation of all previous governments had been grossly inequitable until the Catasto was forced upon the Albizzi by threatenings of revolt. Nor was taxation less offensive after Lorenzo's death. Guicciardini represents Lorenzo's apologist, Bernardo del Nero, as prophesying that republican finance from ignorance, incompetence, and passion would be more extravagant and unjust than the systematic oppression of the Medici. And so it proved. After Piero's fall Savonarola's influence carried the proposal that the sole tax should be the Tenth on land and that this should be paid but once a year, and this with Pisa in revolt and France sucking Florence of subsidies for services which she never rendered. It was as though a religious leader should now propose the abolition of the income tax and liquor duties in time of war. The democratic party held, indeed, mainly to the incidence of taxation on land, though it was land that was suffering chiefly from the Pisan war and provisions were at famine price. Yet the sliding scale was re-introduced, and the Tenth was levied over and over again in the course of the year, swallowing up more than the land produced. In addition to this have to be added the imposition of forced

loans to an extreme degree, and the suspension of the interest of the State debt. Delay and false attempts at economy were frequently the cause of a tenfold expenditure.

There was some justice in Bernardo's criticism of popular taxation, that democratic methods would generally be proved more unjust and less judicious than those of monarchy, because it was the nature of the people to keep loading the backs of those who were in a position superior to itself, and, as the poor were in a vast majority, success was easy. The rich, he added, should be protected, caressed and not destroyed, for at all times they do honour to the country and give employment to the poor, and in times of need it is they who come to the rescue of the State. Lorenzo's taxation, said the old statesman, combined the maximum of briskness with the minimum of injustice. Under the democracy these proportions were reversed. The aristocracy was driven back into the arms of the Medici, whom they had expelled, by the intolerable exactions of the middle classes. Modern sentimentalism has concealed the ugly features of the republican period. Patriotism out of another's pocket is after all but a cheap virtue. These unpalatable facts form the best justification of Lorenzo's unjustifiable methods. Under the republic Florentine prosperity was dwindling, and Florence was isolated in Italy. Lorenzo at least did not defeat his object nor permanently diminish the prosperity and consideration of his town. The weak unmilitary State had become the balance of Italy, and never was she more financially

MEDAL WITH PORTRAITS OF LORENZO AND GIULIANO DE' MEDICI.

Struck by Antonio Pollaiuolo to commemorate the Pazzi conspiracy.

MEDAL WITH PORTRAIT OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI

On the reverse the seated figure of Florence.

prosperous than in the years which preceded her master's death. Building is the most sensitive of financial barometers. It was a commonplace that the building trade had never been so active as during the last two years of Lorenzo's life, when taxation was decreasing. Civil and ecclesiastical architecture received an extraordinary impetus which was checked at once upon the ruler's death. Building perhaps never completely revived until the too short moments during which Florence became the capital of Modern Italy. The poorer classes at all events regretted the golden days of Lorenzo, when, if duties on corn and wine were high, the rich could still give employment which enabled the poor to bear them.

It is possible to doubt whether there is sufficient evidence in print for the popular version of Lorenzo's financial difficulties and dishonesties. On such a subject isolated passages from professional grumblers, such as Rinuccini and Cambi, go for little, and cursory criticisms of later writers, Guicciardini, Machiavelli, and Varchi for not much more. It is commonly assumed that Cosimo aided the revenues of the State, while Lorenzo robbed them, that the grandson was as uniformly unfortunate in business as his grandfather was successful. All this may be true but it is difficult of proof. The current prices of the funds from time to time would seem to show that the decline of public credit was long anterior to Lorenzo's rule. The Monte Commune five per cents, for example, dropped from 60 to 42½ between 1427 and 1432 while in 1458 they had sunk to 20.

In Lorenzo's first year this stock stood at 24, and in 1490 at 27, but fell to $11\frac{1}{2}$ when the new Balìa applied a large proportion of the interest to the expenses of Giovanni de' Medici's Cardinalate. Until quite the close therefore of Lorenzo's career, notwithstanding the alleged embezzlement, public credit had up to some extent improved. Very unpopular, however, were the changes made in the "Monte delle Doti," the State fund for dowering girls. This may be regarded as an insurance against marriage. The citizens made an annual payment to the State which, accumulating at high interest, provided substantial dowry at the close of a term of years. If the girl died or entered a convent the father recovered half the sum which would otherwise have been due. It was now, however, arranged that a moiety of the dowry should remain in the funds, bearing interest at seven per cent. This had the lamentable consequence that young men who preferred handling capital to receiving interest declined to marry, and indeed there was no certainty that the interest would always be regularly paid.* The State had hitherto treated dowries tenderly. When the wife's dowry was subjected to the Catasto, it was found that marriages simultaneously fell off, and thenceforward the dower was only assessed at half its value. Such evidence as there is would seem to disprove the com-

* Varchi's statement that the Balìa of 1491 reduced the interest from seven per cent to three per cent seems doubtful. It was rather, perhaps, the creation of a new "Monte delle Doti" three per cent stock which is afterwards found quoted. The purchase price being correspondingly less, the interest to the purchaser would have been the same.

mon theory that Lorenzo for his private purposes largely increased the direct taxation. It is found to vary immediately in proportion to war expenses, whereas occasionally an additional tax was raised for importing corn in years of scarcity. Thus in 1471 direct taxation yielded 104,775 florins. The war of Volterra in the following year raised this sum to 172,756. Then it sank until the disastrous years 1478–80, the taxation for 1479 amounting to 367,450. By 1482, however, it had fallen to 108,663, but rose during the years 1483–7 which were occupied by the Ferrarese and Barons' wars, to an average of 160,000. For the last four peaceful years of Lorenzo's life the sum remained at 105,000. These figures seem conclusive, and it may be remarked that Lorenzo's life closes with an amount of annual taxation exactly corresponding to that with which it started.

The Medici banking business had its ups and downs. It is certain that Lorenzo was glad, from time to time, to raise money by borrowing, or by selling or mortgaging his estates, but this was no uncommon incident in the commercial history of the day, when profits were rapid and risks great. The crises were not all due to Lorenzo's mismanagement. From the advice given by Renato Pazzi to his family and from other evidence it is clear that the two brothers were in danger of bankruptcy in 1478. It was then that the Mugello estate was mortgaged to their cousin Lorenzo, and that State funds were said to have been applied to save the firm. The failure of the Portinari Bank at Bruges, the relation

of which to the Medici is not quite certain, had caused a general panic. This failure, however, was due to the sudden death of Mary of Burgundy who left her debts unpaid. So also there was a crisis in and about 1484 which was attributed to the princely style in which Lorenzo's partners at Bruges and Lyons lived. An illustration of Lorenzo's occasional want of ready money is afforded by the marriage of his daughter Maddalena. A Florentine girl of good position usually received 1500 florins, Lorenzo gave his other daughters 2000, including the sum to their credit at the Monte delle Doti, but to Maddalena he had promised 4000. The Pope had pushed on the marriage in the autumn of 1488, and Lorenzo confessed that he had "so many holes to fill" that he could not pay in ready money. Soon after this, however, the banks both at Lyons and at Rome were thriving. From the former town Sassetti wrote that old customers had returned, while new clients were flocking in. Lorenzo's constant correspondence with this family would itself go far to disprove the statement that he neglected or withdrew from business. An historian's natural ignorance of financial operations is responsible for one of the most curious charges against Lorenzo. The Bartolini bank, in which he had shares, undertook the payment of the troops in the war of 1478, and charged a commission of eight per cent. This is magnified into an accusation of personal embezzlement against Lorenzo, of an unpatriotic action at a national crisis. That the bank charged a commission was a matter of course, and the commission, for those days,

was not unduly high. Despotic as Lorenzo might have been he could scarcely have induced his fellow shareholders to undertake gratuitously a troublesome and risky operation.

In his monopoly of the magistracy Lorenzo's conduct is more easily defended than in his manipulation of finance. It is frequently laid to his charge that he altogether excluded from the enjoyment of office some of the ablest individuals, and some of the most influential families, while he promoted men of low degree hitherto unknown to fame. That he did so was a matter of course; such a policy is inseparable from all party government. Lorenzo has often been compared to Pericles. The position which he held was undoubtedly very similar. Without necessarily holding official position, both men by their personal influence wielded the resources of the dominant party of the State. It was their interest, if not their duty, to keep the members of the minority in the shade, to allure or reward support by the sunlight of office. Party government existed as definitely in Florence as in England or the United States; even in these countries it has from time to time been found easier to distinguish parties by adherence to individuals rather than to any definite group of principles. In Florence, it is probable, the principles of government and opposition are only harder to distinguish because there were no general elections in the modern sense, and therefore no party programmes elaborated for this purpose. The position of the leading member of the Albizzi, or the Medici, was not altogether unlike that of an English premier,

whose power depends upon no office known to the constitution. The majority on which he rested was not, indeed, to be tested by votes, but it consisted in undefined popular support, and when this failed the party fell. That the changes were much less frequent than in modern England was due to several causes. The "spoils system" was in Florence much more complete; a party once in power had far more means of rewarding adherents. But chiefly the reason was the entire absence of elections in the modern sense. The democratic love of equality had defeated itself. The drawing by lot, the insignificance of the individual magistracies, the rapid rotation of offices deprived the actual election to the magistrates of all significance. There was no natural and definite moment at which discontent with the administration could make itself vocal. A party once in power had the control not only of the drawing for the magistracies, but of what was much more important, the filling of the boxes with the names of candidates from whom the officials should be drawn. Thus it was difficult to eject the ruling party save by the rough and ready means of revolution. The hereditary tendency of party leadership at Florence also conceals the resemblance of the Florentine to any modern system. Yet on the one hand, it is questionable if Pitt would have led a party at twenty-four had he not been his father's son; on the other, it was at times doubtful whether the leadership would not pass from Cosimo or Piero to some other member of the party, and quite uncertain whether on Piero's death Soderini would not take the lead.

So too in the Albizzi *régime* Maso was rather succeeded by Niccolò da Uzzano than by Rinaldo degli Albizzi.

If it has been made clear that Lorenzo was the head of a party, and relied for his existence on party support, the consequences are obvious. He must necessarily exclude from the executive every element of opposition, for it was only through the executive that the power of the party and his own influence found expression. Were he to loose his hold of the executive his party would be proscribed, himself in all probability ostracised. No one blames a Radical government for excluding from office the most talented members of the opposition, nor a Democratic President for not admitting to a Secretaryship of State the most competent of Republicans. Bolingbroke and Chatham clamoured against government by party, and for a departmental system in which administrative capacity should constitute the sole claim to office. Yet it is certain that neither would have admitted their leading opponents to their government.

At Florence the practice of exclusion existed for at least two centuries before Lorenzo's age. The Ghibellines had been expelled, the nobles debarred from office by law. As the Guelfic party split within itself, the dominant section at each breach confined the possession of the magistracy to its own members. Albizzi had driven out Alberti, to fall themselves before the Medici. For Lorenzo the danger was rivalry from within the party rather than attack from without. The opposition was powerless,

but ambitious friends whose office had been due to Medicean influence might not improbably use their official power to oust him from his unofficial supremacy, or in their capacity as ambassadors do him injury at a foreign Court. Hence his unceasing suspicion, and his jealousy of possible rivals, admitted even by friendly witnesses. Lorenzo must be first or nowhere. Thus he strove, by one means or other, to retain his control upon the *squittino* and the drawings, to thwart any suggestion of independence. For this reason it was that he monopolised for his dependents the clerkships in the permanent civil service, that they might both watch and check the actions of their temporary superiors. So too each ambassador must have a shadow whose duty it was to send separate reports to the Via Larga. In one case at least Lorenzo purchased present security at the expense of future reputation. Alamanno Rinuccini lost Lorenzo's confidence during his embassy at Rome, and henceforth was excluded from any important office, kept for some time at arm's length in a paltry provincial magistracy. And it is from Rinuccini that the most damaging criticisms of Lorenzo's government are drawn.

It is to Lorenzo's credit that under him the attitude of the government towards opponents became more humane. Just as in England when the principles of party government became more clearly understood, impeachment gave place to mere change of ministry, so too in Florence exclusion from office was sufficient punishment. The Pazzi were, of course, caught red-handed in an atrocious crime,

but apart from them there are, under Lorenzo, few cases of exile or of judicial persecution. Even the imprisoned Pazzi were soon released ; Filippo Strozzi was recalled from exile and was held in high favour by Lorenzo. The Albizzi resought their home, while we have seen the Ricasoli qualified for office, in return for their gallant defence of the Florentine frontiers. Lorenzo's character was competitive and jealous, independently of political ambition ; he was, however, by nature humane. An irresponsible ruler must sometimes protect himself against his will. In Guicciardini's dialogue, Bernardo del Nero urges that he had seen Lorenzo forced to resolutions contrary to his generous nature with tears in his eyes. He struck very few, he elsewhere adds, and those with all possible gentleness. Even the zealous republican Nardi records the unanimous opinion as to the moderate and considerate character of Lorenzo's sway, complaining only that he preferred party attachment to personal worth, and allowed but few citizens to acquire experience in government. The administration of justice was the darkest stain on all Italian governments, if the territory of Venice be excepted. The republics were as bad as the despotisms, and, perhaps, worse, because political feeling ran higher, and because the people, as Aristotle knew, judge by passion rather than by law. In Florence, Lorenzo had inherited bad traditions; there had been no redress for a political opponent, no condemnation for a political supporter. It was in vain that here, as elsewhere in central and northern Italy, outside Venetia, foreign judges presided

over the courts, in the hope that they would be free from party feeling. The foreign podestà fell at once under governmental or family influences; his future career and emoluments depended upon the character which the ruling party gave him on retirement. Hence it was that Venice was held up as a model for all Italy, because her officers and her courts of appeal rendered strict justice between Guelf and Ghibelline, between rich and poor. "Liberty," wrote Guicciardini, "should be the servant of justice, and if only in an oligarchy or a monarchy justice were secure, the people would have little cause to long for liberty." Thus, too, it was that Machiavelli saw in France the most constitutional country of the world, because her great court, the Parliament of Paris, held the scales even, and was independent of political pressure from above. In the republic which succeeded Lorenzo's son, justice and finance were the two diseased lungs which would have killed her had she not died a violent death. Lorenzo's own *régime* contrasts in this respect favourably with that of his predecessors and successors. In civil justice, indeed, there was little fault to find. There were, it is possible, occasional recommendations of friends, which the courts did not venture to neglect; frequently, no doubt without the knowledge of Lorenzo or his chief supporters, the rank and file of the Medicean party unduly pressed their case. It could not be helped if judges tried to guess the decision which would be most grateful to Lorenzo. But, if this be compared with the condition of the contemporary English courts as

described in the Paston letters, there is little cause for blame. In criminal justice, moreover, it was granted that Lorenzo checked severity. Political enemies had usually no reason to fear unjust punishment. It was on the side of leniency that Lorenzo was forced to err. He wished indeed that town and country should be quiet, that none should be oppressed, that no great scandal should remain unpunished. In the country districts, however, this was difficult. Here the standard of order and civilisation was far lower, deeds of violence and rapine more frequent. Families, parties, and townships held closely together; to punish one was to alienate all. It had always been the policy of the Medici to win support in the country, and in the absence of police and military it was on these very families and cliques that they must needs rely. A crime once committed Lorenzo was forced to tolerate impunity, to quash conviction, or to send private orders for the release of an imprisoned scoundrel. Thus it happened that, in the wilder districts, men of violence would occupy the property of their neighbours, of churches, hospitals, and monasteries, and the injured parties did not dare to claim their due.

The difficulties of Pier Filippo Pandolfini, in his Vicariate of Firenzuola, will illustrate the course of justice in upland Tuscany, where indeed, even to the present day, the paths of the law are not always smooth. One morning he received a letter from Lorenzo, on opening which he could scarcely believe his eyes. It contained a warm recommendation of Lorenzo da Rapazzo, treating him as a person of

importance. Now Lorenzo was in gaol, a place for which he seemed expressly made. Wonder was increased when Lorenzo's letter was followed by another from the Otto di Guardia, pressing the Vicar to show favour to the gaol-bird. Pandolfini took the recommendation as a command. He could not in decency release the criminal, but with the aid of an accomplice and a big stone the prisoner made a hole in the wall of his cell and took to flight. Order indeed was very difficult, apart from such governmental intervention. A peasant, upon whose mare distress was levied, attacked with a spit and with much gross language the servants of the Vicar, recovering his mare by force of arms. Soldiers of the republic were sent into the mountains to capture a notorious offender, but they shewed little judgment and less courage. The men never caught the brigand, but one of the soldiers let his horse be stolen by a villager. Robbers and assassins not only defied the Vicar's scanty police force, but laughed at their expense.

In Florence no such scandals were permitted and Lorenzo took part in the prevention of disorder. A youth who had killed a police officer had been extradited from Siena. As he was led through the streets the populace, whose favour is always with the criminal against the police, cried "Run, run!" and attempted to release him. The Eight appeared and ordered the *piazza* to be cleared on pain of death. Lorenzo's own cousin and the envoys of Genoa and Milan begged for the youth's release. But Lorenzo ordered him to be hung from the window of the

Bargello, and had four of those who had cried "Run" punished with four turns of the rope and four years of exile. He would not leave the *piazza* until order was restored.

Far more extraordinary to English and American readers than Lorenzo's intervention in the magistracy and in finance is his interference with society and especially with marriage. Yet to this he attributed the highest importance, and it was the most frequent and serious charge that his enemies brought against him. No important marriage was concluded in Florence without Lorenzo's leave, many were negotiated by him, and many more prevented. Such interference was not unusual in Florentine politics. It was continued under his republican successors. An imaginary engagement was announced that the popular government might have the credit of forbidding it; a Strozzi was subjected to State persecution and severely punished for his betrothal to a Medici. Lorenzo, however, carried the practice farther than any other statesman; important marriages he regulated, of course, on political grounds, but it seems difficult to ascribe his interference in middle-class matrimony to anything but an abnormal interest in the subject, or a diseased craving for personal influence. The whole question is eminently characteristic of Florentine life and is therefore worth discussing, all the more so as the principles may seem unintelligible to the ordinary Anglo-Saxon reader. No American President or English Premier has ever probably prevented the marriage of a wealthy or brilliant lady of his party with a possible

political rival within the ranks, or a political opponent without them. The exogamous marriage, the marriage by capture from the enemies' camp-fire, implies distinction rather than disgrace. In Florence this was quite otherwise. It has often been said that the Italian, and therefore *par excellence* the Florentine Renaissance, was the emancipation of the individual from the environment of circumstances, that he was detached from all ties of legitimacy, family or hereditary profession, that his individuality and not his status was the basis of social assessment. This to a great extent is true, though much needless nonsense has been talked and written on the subject. In spite of this, however, the family in Florence was much more important than is easy to conceive in America, or even in the English home of the great Whig families. It was remarked that in Venice family feuds were as frequent, family cliques as close as they were in Florence, but that they rarely affected politics. In Florence, however, family alliance formed the main article of political association. The theory was so strong that it overrode the numerous practical exceptions. It was taken for granted that a family would hold together, and utilise its union to the utmost for political purposes, even in spite of the private and prudent remonstrances of individual members. This it has been seen was the explanation of the secrecy of the Pazzi conspiracy and of the severity of its punishment. This was the reason why the Medici when seeking to found their power in Florence attached all the leading families by intermarriage, and when they

wished to establish their influence in Italy, deliberately risked internal security for external guarantees. What Lorenzo had to fear was a combination of powerful families which would endanger the hegemony of the Medici, which would replace the monarchical by the oligarchic principle. This is a complete explanation of his policy but not of the extreme irritation which it caused.

In England or America the dowry is only a desirable incident in marriage, it is not even an inseparable accident. But in Italy it was, and is, of the essence of matrimony. Marriage was a matter of pecuniary equivalent rather than of reciprocal attachment. The feeling still exists. The writer has heard a peasant descanting on the physical graces and the material attractions of his landlord's daughter. Why, he asked, has she never married? Because, proudly replied the *contadino*, there is no one rich enough to match her dowry. This principle of equal birth and equal fortune rendered marriages difficult, more difficult indeed than the uncalculating and incalculable principles of love. "Marriage," once wrote a lady member of a literary society on Lenten weddings, "is under any circumstances so difficult, that no artificial restrictions should be imposed."

Lorenzo therefore made marriage difficult. But even this is not quite all. In England or America a lady if prevented from marrying becomes an old maid and no more is thought about it. If she is rich she is happy, if she is poor she is useful. In most cases she is respected, in all she is respectable. But this is a local peculiarity. To the Italian the Anglo-

American old maid is an inexplicable phenomenon, the product of an alien civilisation or barbarism. The difference depends upon a different estimate of morality. Among the Romanic nations chastity is for a man regarded as unnecessary, for a woman impossible. The Florentines of Lorenzo's age did indeed grant a reasonable amount of freedom to their daughters, they did not, as the Spaniards, immure them in a convent from earliest infancy to the day of marriage. Yet early marriage was regarded as the only safeguard of family honour, and it is this, which, even apart from his political pretensions, produced the irritation against Lorenzo's intervention. Very closely connected with this in a somewhat lower class was the unpopularity of the measure by which Lorenzo suspended the payment of dowries guaranteed by the Monte delle Doti. Anglo-Saxons would dwell on this as a breach of commercial faith, as an act of national bankruptcy corresponding to the suspension of government annuities. The Florentines, however, regarded it as a blow to the sanctity of family life, and as conducing to the dishonour of their daughters.

In other ways Lorenzo's intervention in social life is more in accord with advanced modern notions. He regarded it as his duty or his interest to provide for the entertainment of the people. A modern statesman has expressed his belief that the poor need amusement rather than politics, that they would prefer a circus to a parish council. Lorenzo also was all on the side of the circus. He threw himself heart and soul into festivals and spectacles which

would entertain the lower classes. He took upon himself the personal superintendence of the programme for San Giovanni, employing the best artists to design the triumphal cars, himself writing the songs which their occupants should sing, transforming a coarse and vulgar popular fair into an artistic spectacle, full nevertheless of life and fun, and not quite devoid of its element of license. That the change was popular is proved by the fact that save for the short space of Savonarola's influence the festival was continued for generations on Lorenzo's lines. So too his love of hunting and hawking made him popular in the country districts, while there was never an important race for the *palio* in Florentine territory but Lorenzo sent a horse to run. At all this malcontent aristocrats would grumble; at Florence, as at Rome, they said that *panem et circenses* were the means by which Cæsarism corrupted liberty. They complained too of the reckless expenditure in the entertainment of foreign princes and their suites, of the free board and lodging accorded to them throughout Florentine territory, of the plays and illuminations and public banquets which welcomed them at Florence. But these were sources of pleasure and excitement to the common folk, to the tradesmen and the artists, for many of whom employment was thus provided, for all, amusement. The people's conscience is never smitten by extravagance at another's cost. Lorenzo spent largely on these objects from his own resources, but it was a good investment for his house. It was the absence of amusement and employment for the lower

classes which became a recognised danger for the republican government. Savonarola indeed for the moment skilfully substituted instruction for amusement, giving to Lorenzo's spectacles a religious colouring, urging the artists to devote their talent to sacred uses, to teach the story of the Bible in all simplicity in place of the fables of nude or overdressed Paganism. The burning of Savonarola was the last scene of this new form of excitement of which the burning of "the Vanities" was the first. From that moment the lower classes turned their eyes towards the Medici, while the middle classes clung to the constitution in which they had so large a share.

Lorenzo's power would have been impossible without the favour of the masses. These care little for the form of government; their main interest is necessarily economic rather than constitutional. Their support is given to the government which can raise their standard of comfort; and provide diversions from their toil. If in modern states the masses are democratic, it is because under a representative system they can use the weight of numbers to satisfy their economic needs. The material results of the Medicean monarchy gratified the populace; they did not heed that the theory of government was being changed.*

* Guicciardini expressly connects the decline of public spirit with the desire for material comfort. "The people of Florence are generally speaking poor, and owing to our modes of life every one is extremely anxious to be rich. Thus they are ill-adapted to uphold the liberty of the city, for this hunger for riches makes them follow their own private interests, without any regard or consideration for the public honour and glory."—*Op. Ined.*, i., 171.

MAY-DAY BEFORE THE MEDICI PALACE.

A choir of girls offers a wreath to Lorenzo. From the frontispiece to "Canzone a ballo composte dal magnifico Lorenzo de' Medici e da M. Agnolo Politiano." Florence, 1568.

It may be admitted that the middle class is the soundest element in the State. But a republic could not be regarded as ideal, which excluded its gentry from the administration, which gave only a fourth share to the lower middle class, and no share at all to the labouring masses, and which confined its citizenship to the inhabitants of the capital. To the excluded classes the despotism of the Medici was naturally more welcome than this mockery of freedom. "It is better," says Guicciardini, "to be the subject of a prince than of a republic, for a republic keeps all its subjects under, and gives no share of its greatness save to its own citizens; a prince is common to all, one man is as much his subject as another, therefore every one can hope to be favoured or employed."

The Medici were reproached by their contemporaries with employing in the administration Florentines of low estate, or even worse, men who were not citizens of Florence but of her subject towns. This practice can now be hardly regarded but as a merit. Such officials, owing their positions entirely to their patrons, were doubtless more apt to be subservient. But at least a vent was given to the abler and more ambitious members of the excluded classes; the humours, to use Machiavelli's phrase, were satisfied, which, if unsatisfied, bring governments to ruin. It was, indeed, a rough amends for the lack of representation, and a monarch's choice may be as reasonable as a people's. If some of Lorenzo's agents of a lower class could not withstand the temptations of their position, if a Ser Giovanni da Prato Vecchio and a Piero da Bibbiena abused their trust, it was no

more nor less than what has happened in the most modern, the least limited of democracies.

"Many falsehoods," wrote Rinuccini, "about Lorenzo have been spread in eye service and deceit, by flatterers and perverters of the truth, bought for the most part and corrupted by him." Could an unarmed citizen, whose fortunes were frequently embarrassed, single-handed corrupt a people? Was not perhaps, to use Machiavelli's phrase, the limb of Tuscany corrupt even as that of Milan or of Naples? Or is it necessarily corrupt to prefer the rule of one to that of many? Did not the corruption consist not so much in the change from democracy to monarchy as in the inherent vices of Italian democracy? Florence was but following other great republics, the Guelfic Lombard cities which had accepted despotism as preferable to chronic strife. In Tuscany herself Pisa, before her absorption by Florence, had followed the general rule. Lucca indeed threw off her tyrants, and a narrow aristocracy retained its sway until the very close of the eighteenth century, but Lucca had no territory. Siena in spite of her traditions of stormy freedom fell, not to a military tyrant, but to the civic blandishments of Petrucci, who made Lorenzo de' Medici his model. Just beyond the Tuscan borders Perugia accepted the yoke of the Baglioni. Bologna, full of energy, enterprise, and faction, bowed to the house of Bentivoglio. Yet these two latter families of despots were far more oppressive than were the Medici. The republic which succeeded the Medici met its end, it is true, at foreign hands, but it had already gone far on the

path of despotism. Who can doubt that Soderini would ultimately have assumed the position of the Medici? He was already neglecting, if not the forms, yet the traditions of the constitution. His brother's cardinalate, even as that of Lorenzo's son, was regarded as a compliment to the dynasty which was ruling Florence. Men saw a still surer sign in the increasing prominence of women. If Soderini would not play the prince, his handsome wife was prepared to pose as the princess. Sober citizens saw with horror ladies tripping up and down the steps of the Signoria's palace, and flowers making gay the window sills. It was scarcely possible that Florence should imitate Venice rather than the numerous Italian towns where an elective life office was the foundation of a dynasty. Soderini was no doge. In Venice the tendency was to widen out from personal power to aristocratic power, in Florence and elsewhere to narrow down from oligarchy towards monarchy.

Lorenzo consciously, no doubt, realised that he was a monarch. It is well worth noticing that in his boyish letter to Federigo of Naples, his ideal of a ruler, "truly divine, and born for the welfare of mankind," was not Pericles but Pisistratus, and this at a time when the names of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were ever on the lips of would-be liberators of their country, Roman, Milanese, or Florentine. In Italy all government was discussed from an Aristotelian point of view. Was then Lorenzo a monarch or a tyrant? The Aristotelian tests were these. Did he rule by or against the people's will, and did he rule for the benefit of his state or of himself? The

former question must be answered in Lorenzo's favour, the latter will never be decided. He would himself have quoted the words of his letter to his son, that the weal of Florence was the welfare of the Medici; he honestly believed that he was acting for the general good. We, who are not obliged to answer Aristotelian questions, may admit with Guicciardini that under Lorenzo Florence was not free, and may add with him that she could not have found a better and more pleasing despot.

Soderini.

Tornabuoni.

Girolamo Savonarola, and reverse.

CHAPTER VIII.

Lorenzo's character and home life—The Cardinalate of Giovanni—Lorenzo's relation to Savonarola—Opinions of Machiavelli and Guicciardini on his rule—Lorenzo's death—Its effects upon Italy and Florence.

1469–1492.

IT is the prize or the penalty of a versatile, receptive nature to be regarded as a mystery. The slower mind cannot follow with sufficient speed the workings of so sensitive an instrument, though the eye marks the multiplicity of results. The reality is that the action and reaction of circumstances and character are peculiarly rapid, but the observer believes that the outward manifestations are artificial and dramatic, having little relation to the mysterious inner life. This forms a real difficulty in the appreciation of the South-European character by Anglo-Saxons, who are rarely genuinely versatile. They have an inborn deep-seated distrust for such natures;

the few English public men, for instance, who have been so gifted, have been regarded, at the best, as problems, more often as impostors, or as characters abnormally weak and changeable.

Thus it is that Lorenzo de' Medici has been so often called a mystery, that both the attraction and the repulsion which he has exercised have lain in what is called the mysterious element. Really, however, there has seldom been a nature less mysterious. He was completely natural, singularly open to the influence of circumstance. As his intellect was versatile, so his character was receptive. He possessed in abundance that quality of "give and take," that power of impressing others and of receiving their impression, that gift of *simpatia* which to the Italian expresses so much more than its English representative. Such a person is not necessarily weak or fickle, deficient in will or patience. He deliberately abandons himself to the interest of the moment; it is to him an aim in itself, and not an instrument. Lorenzo was equally unaffected whether he were planning a comic novelty for the Carnival, or critically examining the last new gem or manuscript that his agents had brought or forwarded. At table he would give grave advice to the young Michelangelo, throw a rhyme or an epigram across the board to Pulci, or discuss the problem of unity in plurality with Marsilio Ficino. He could give audience to an ambassador or a horse-trainer, or a popular preacher, could hold a party caucus in the Via Larga, attend a critical meeting of the Seventy, and then ride off to Careggi or Caiano to play with his children, and rise

with the lark to ride to hounds, or fly his favourite falcons.*

In all this there was no deep-laid scheme, hardly an inner life. Sometimes he made the moment, sometimes he caught it on the wing. He had, no doubt, opportunities which no modern statesman can possess. Socially and intellectually Europe has lost much in the disappearance of the city state. Great talents in different departments, to be exhibited together, must now be deliberately entrapped. In Florence society, artistic, literary, and political, can hardly have numbered half a thousand members. All or most of these Lorenzo necessarily knew, and not only Lorenzo, but every leading Florentine, the cultivated and fastidious Rucellai, the wealthy Strozzi, striving to make up for lost years of exile, the young Lorenzo Tornabuoni, proud of his beauti-

* Lorenzo's versatility is the frequent theme of his contemporaries. Landino dwells on it in his dedication to Piero of his *Commentaries on Virgil.* "Where will you find wiser counsel, sharper reasoning, speedier decision, greater zeal in upholding and extending the glory of the State, greater watchfulness, aye and greater patience? For a statesman his literary gifts are high; he is a good musician, a good architect, a good farmer. In the use of his native tongue he is so highly trained, so perfectly equipped that on reading his elegies or his lyrics you would readily rank him above all the poets of our own age, and would assign him a place very near, indeed, to those great ones of yore." Better known are the lines from Politian's *Nutricia*, which conclude the panegyric on his patron's writings:

> What other men call study and hard toil
> Is sport to you, for tired of civic moil
> Released you ride, and whet your strength to song.
> Oh! happy wit, happy the heart and strong
> To shift its mighty bearings, large the mind
> Its giant themes in varied wreath to wind.

ful Albizzi bride, and of the Botticelli frescos in his dining-hall. Variety of society in itself creates or stimulates versatility of intellect. In Lorenzo's career it is impossible to draw a hard and fast line between diplomacy and politics, art and literature, religion and philosophy, domesticity and public life, country sports and city spectacles. He would never have divided his own life into chapters; he might have compared it to a fresco, where the artist must give unity of composition, rhythm of line, and harmony of colour before the plaster dries. Yet for modern students, who must learn before they can feel, it is almost necessary to analyse so manifold a character. Thus as Lorenzo's influence in domestic politics and foreign affairs, in art and literature, have been isolated, so it is worth while to follow the practice of modern journalism, and exhibit him "at home."

Lorenzo's marriage was not that ideal union of two perfections which he recognises as so rare in human life. Nor was it the result of that natural selection, that harmony and due proportion between the lover and his beloved, which, as he wrote himself, alone justified their union. Clarice was neither beautiful nor clever, nor even highly educated. She had been chosen for the very reasons which Lorenzo rejects as false constituents of love, "for nobility of birth, for hope of great possessions, and other conveniences." She could not have shone among the brilliant Florentine girls, such as the learned Alessandra Scala, who wrote in Greek even to a rejected lover, or the popular Marietta Strozzi, whose ad-

mirers snowballed her on her balcony, and who was so clever in her returns that she carried off the honours of the fight. Nevertheless, the marriage was not unhappy. Clarice was a true wife, and a devoted mother, spoiling her children as Italians will. Such correspondence as exists between husband and wife is an evidence of mutual regard, and of unity in domestic interests. Expressions of regret at enforced absence, of longing for a speedy meeting, of anxiety for health, are obviously genuine. If a dismissed servant wished to regain his place, if villagers craved a favour from Lorenzo, it was to Clarice that they turned, and she pressed their cause with kindly dignity in the conviction that she would not be denied. Family life in the Medici household was extremely simple. Lorenzo romped with his children, joined in their music, wrote a religious play for them to act. The unsympathetic Machiavelli blames him for want of self-respect in becoming a child among his children. An imaginative French writer has pictured him as rolling on the floor with the future Leo X., playing at "noughts and crosses" with Giuliano, "il Penseroso." Piero's childish letters show the complete confidence which existed between father and child. In one he begs for sweetmeats, in another prays Lorenzo to be careful of the plague, and not to forget his children, because they were tiny things, and could not do without him. Another gives a picture of the "tiny things"—"Giuliano does nothing but laugh; Lucrezia sews, sings, and reads; Maddalena goes knocking her head against the walls, but does not hurt herself; Luisa can already say

several little sentences; Contessina is making a great noise all over the house." Piero was growing older, and would write in Latin and coax his father for a pony. "I have always written in Latin to give more tone to my letters, but I have not yet got that pony which you promised, so all the others chaff me. . . . I am afraid that some misfortune may have happened to the pony, for, if it was well, I know that you would have sent it as you promised. . . . In case it cannot come, please send me another." It is needless to say that the coveted pony came. Piero gave trouble to his father in later years. Not content with football and *pallone*, he would go a-roystering through the streets at night, and, in Guicciardini's words, "found himself present at the death of a man or two." Of his three sons, Lorenzo would say that Piero was the madcap, Giovanni the wiseacre, and Giuliano the good boy. Lucrezia married Jacopo Salviati. She was a brave girl, and when cross-questioned by the republican magistracy as to her part in a conspiracy to restore her brother Piero, she replied that he was her brother, and that she wished for his success. Contessina was married to Piero Ridolfi, while Luisa died when engaged to Giovanni de' Medici, a match by which Lorenzo hoped to bind the junior branch of the house more closely to his own. Maddalena, the wife of Franceschetto Cybò, became her mother's favourite. Very pathetic are Lorenzo's letters to the Pope, begging that she might be left to her parents a little longer, her mother was so ill, and the girl was the very "eye of her head." Even animals had their share in the affec-

VILLA AT POGGIO A CAIANO.

Built for Lorenzo by Giuliano da San Gallo.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

tionate family life. Lorenzo's horse, Morello, would stamp and neigh at his approach, and refuse his food if his master did not feed him.

In the Via Larga the thinking was higher than the living. After the wedding festivities were over Cybò was disappointed with the plainness of his dinner; he had given his noble companions, who were lodged elsewhere, expectations of great luxury. He found that his friends fared sumptuously, but was assured by Lorenzo that he himself was being treated not as a stranger but as a son. No pains were spared in the education of the children, and Lorenzo would receive detailed reports even during the troubles of the Papal-Neapolitan war. The boy's tutor was Politian, but in his master's absence this pride of Humanism did not always add to domestic comfort. The dual control of mother and tutor ended in an open breach. Few household squabbles have had so permanent a fame. Neither poets nor scholars are the easiest men with whom to live, and Politian had the misfortune to be both. Torn from all his literary friends, imprisoned by incessant rain in a villa in the cold Mugello, shivering before a fire in dressing-gown and slippers, the incarnation of pure intellect was all prepared to quarrel with the proud half-educated woman who was his sole companion. The mother interfered with the tutor's time-table; just as Piero began to read his Greek, he was called away to sing his psalms; Politian could not continue the boy's education, unless the father would write and give him better control. The lady's letters evoke more sympathy. She had long tolerated, she wrote, Politian's sar-

casms, but he called her names that she could no longer bear; she would support his presence, if her husband would command it, but she was sure that he would not insist. Meanwhile she turned the tutor out-of-doors. Lorenzo has been blamed for not avenging the insults to his wife. He gave Politian shelter at Fiesole, and the friendly correspondence was never interrupted. He knew the poet's whims. Politian had before now apologised for his ill-temper; these storms were but the thunder-clouds which swept over his native heights of Montepulciano. The Humanists were the spoiled darlings of the age. Who had ever dismissed a Humanist for insulting a lady with his ribald tongue? Even a modern prince would hesitate to offend the greatest poet and professor of his land.

Clarice died, before she was forty, in July, 1487. She had been desperately ill, but the end was sudden and Lorenzo was not with her. A week previously he had been ordered to Filetta in the Sienese territory, in the hope that the neighbouring sulphur baths would relieve his gout. If any belief may be placed in a widower's letters there can be no doubt that Lorenzo's sorrow was very real. He at least did not seek another wife, an unusual phenomenon in a man of his position. This grief was counterbalanced by the great pleasure of Lorenzo's life, the cardinalate of his second son. The little boy was a precocious pluralist. The King of France had given him the abbey of Font Doulce; the Pope that of Passignano, the richest in Tuscany; Ludovico Moro that of Miramondo; and Ferrante, the great abbey

of Monte Cassino *in commendam*. But Lorenzo left the Pope no peace until he received a cardinalate. Innocent had declared that he would make no cardinals under the age of thirty, and Giovanni was not fourteen. Yet in March, 1489, he yielded. The nomination, however, under pain of excommunication, was to be kept secret for three years. Of this none took any notice; Cardinals divulged the secret, ambassadors congratulated the father; rejoicings in Florence were public; Politian wrote a letter of gratitude to the Pope. When in 1490 Innocent had an apoplectic fit, Lorenzo's terror was great. On March 9, 1492, however, the Cardinal's *insignia* were formally conferred in the abbey church of Fiesole. The young ecclesiastic rode down in pomp through the Porta San Gallo to the Cathedral and the Palace of the Signoria. It was the greatest festival of Lorenzo's reign. The streets were bright with decorations, every window and every roof thronged with heads. All night long the torches flickered and the bonfires blazed, and revellers and musicians kept the town awake. On the following day the great Mass was held in the Cathedral, crowded from end to end, and then the Monsignore retired to the banquet in the Via Larga. Lorenzo's darling wish was fulfilled none too soon. He could not attend the Mass, nor head his table; he had only strength to be carried into the hall to greet his guests. He never saw his favourite son again.

Critics of the Medici, such as Rinuccini, complained of the huge sums, some 200,000 florins, that his promotion had cost the wretched town, and of

the lavish gift of plate which the Signoria presented to the Cardinal. But it is safe to assert that the majority joined heartily in the rejoicings for what Landucci called a great boon to the city, as well as to Lorenzo and his house. Florence henceforth, as other monarchies, had an official representative in the government of the Church.

The letter of advice from Lorenzo to his son on his joining the Sacred College has become almost as famous as the lecture of Polonius to Laërtes. It is, indeed, an admirable combination of high principles and worldly prudence; the writer himself obviously does not realise where the one element merges in the other. He implored the young Cardinal to recognise in his high promotion only the grace of God, and to prove his recognition by an honest, virtuous life. He could not better continue in God's grace than by perseverance in the practice of frequent confession and reception of the Holy Sacrament, which, to his father's great comfort, he had adopted unexhorted. Morality and the study of theology would lighten the burden of his position. Rome was the pit of all evil; Giovanni would have no lack of tempters and bad counsellors; those who envied his unparalleled promotion would strive to drag him down to their own level. Lorenzo himself had witnessed the deterioration of the College; let his son only consort with the better cardinals. The example of a cardinal was of great weight; were they what they should be it would be better for Christianity. Yet Giovanni must be moderate, and avoid hypocrisy; he must not give offence by the ostentation

of an ascetic life. Within the Consistory he must keep his temper; must never give way to intemperate language; he should measure all proposals by the rule of his own judgment, and at first should use his ears rather than his tongue. The young Medici was urged to be a good priest, to place the honour and advantage of the Church and Holy See above all matters of this world, and above all personal considerations; even so he would have many opportunities of serving his city and his house, for the alliance of the Church was essential to Florence, and the young Cardinal was the link between them, while the interests of the Medici were those of their own city. Giovanni was the youngest cardinal, continued Lorenzo, that had ever been created; he should therefore be respectful to his colleagues, and punctual in his engagements, avoid the intimacy of those among them who led irregular lives, not only on moral grounds, but for the sake of public opinion. In public intercourse it were well to confine conversation to subjects of quite general interest, to moderate rather than exaggerate his enthusiasm. A good stable and tidy household were preferable to great display; a few valuable books and antiquities were more appropriate than silks and jewels. In society it was advisable to be moderate, preferring quality to quantity, entertaining to being entertained. Simple food, and plenty of exercise were essential, for in such a position the preservation of health required constant care. Above all Lorenzo recommended early rising; thus alone could his son find time for his religious and mental exercises, and

for his social and official duties; every evening, moreover, the next day's programme should be considered. In the Consistory it would be judicious, on account of inexperience, to follow the Pope's ripe judgment in all matters of debate. A cardinal must often be a petitioner, but at first as few favours as possible should be asked, for the Pope naturally granted most to those who troubled him least.

Such were the words of guidance, with which Lorenzo, now within a month of his death, sent Giovanni out to his momentous career. The spiritual standard was not too high, yet if every father had given and every son in the College acted up to such advice, the Reformation might have been deferred if not avoided.

Of Lorenzo's qualities as a host and a companion there can be no question. Competitive, and jealous of superiority as he might be, he was the soul of courtesy and kindliness, always ready to aid talent, to oblige a friend, to grant a petition, to perpetrate a job, to be button-holed in the public street. The simplicity and friendliness of his letters to ambassadors account for the devotion with which they served him. For scholars and artists he kept open house; whoever came first, whatever his rank or age, took his seat by the host's side. His conversation, as his character, had the fascination of variety. At times his tongue had a rough edge. To a cousin who boasted of the copious supply of water at his villa he rejoined, "Then you might well afford to keep cleaner hands." To a Sienese who condoled with him on his eyesight and added that the air of

Florence was bad for the eyes, Lorenzo retorted, "and that of Siena for the brain." Many of his witticisms were handed down, but the jokes of other days, or even of our own, seldom bear repetition. Lorenzo worshipped talent; he tolerated the organist Squarcialupi, whose life and conversation provoked much criticism, saying: "If you knew how hard it is to obtain perfection in any art, you would overlook shortcomings." It was his naturalness, his power of throwing himself into the interest of the moment that made him popular. It was little to him if a man's birth was low, or his moral standard was not too high. Yet he believed in breeding, and held that to be a first-rate artist a man should be a gentleman.

The mobility of Lorenzo's character, the constant flicker of light and shade, is well illustrated by an often quoted letter of Politian. Lorenzo and his party, some twenty-six horsemen, were on the road to his Pisan estates; they sang all the way to their first halting-place, the old Imperial keep of Samminiato, interrupting the merriment from time to time by the discussion of some sacred subject, to remind them that it was Lent. Where the road touches the river at the low-lying village of Lastra opposite Signa, which crowns the hill, they tried the noted rough vintage of the district. Lorenzo was in brilliant spirits, which infected all the company. In the evening at Samminiato they read St. Augustine, but the reading gave place to music, and then the grown-up children dressed up the figure of a dancer which they found. Thus they passed the

night, but when Politian wrote Lorenzo had left the company for Mass.

It would be difficult to define Lorenzo's religious convictions. He lived at a critical moment, when it seemed as if the old modes of thought and worship might be thrown into the melting pot. The outward shell of Catholicism was still intact. Men heard Mass and confessed, built churches, endowed convents, and had chapels painted. In many cases these external acts had little relation to faith and less to morals; in many others they were the reflex of a still untainted piety. Bare scepticism was not infrequent, while those thinkers whom negation did not satisfy sought refuge in a compromise between Christ and Plato. Above all, from the beginning of the century there were symptoms that a great religious revival might sweep old and new away together, and these symptoms were becoming acute at the very close of Lorenzo's life. It is probable that he felt the movement of each and every religious current. For the old forms he showed all respect, was punctual in observances, generous in donations. He might satirise the more careless clergy, but he never spoke against the faith. In this there was nothing incompatible with the prevalent sceptical ideas. To these Lorenzo showed some but not much inclination. The questions which he delighted to handle, such as the immortality of the soul, were rather dialectical exercises than religious beliefs and disbeliefs. His nature was too poetical to be attracted by the material negative scepticism of the Italian type. In Platonism, on the other hand, as will be

een hereafter, he was steeped from heart to brain. There was in Lorenzo's mind a strong mystical element. He possessed, perhaps inherited, the religious faculty, which, as other faculties, may or may not reach its full development. If it be granted that his life was far from pure, yet the sensuous and the spiritual natures are not always found apart. There are sinners who are always nearly becoming saints; there are models of morality to whom saintliness, that is absorption in religion, must always be impossible. This, at all events, is true in countries which are not Teutonic.

Lorenzo's attitude towards the Papacy had been audacious. He had twice given direct encouragement to schism, he had disregarded interdict and excommunication, had expressed a wish that the Papacy might be broken into fragments. In this, however, the motives had been political. He regretted, though he sometimes utilised, the deterioration of the Curia. He would wish for less scandal, more decency, more refinement. Subject to the influence of eloquence, he had been carried away by the popular preacher Fra Mariano da Genazzano, had employed his favourite architect to build for him a convent outside the Porta San Gallo. But of far more interest is his relation to Savonarola. The Dominican's mission was to turn the soul from the sensuous surroundings of the Italian Renaissance to a purer life, not to extinguish the love of beauty, but to discipline it, to give it higher objects. This, too, was the professed aim of the Florentine Platonist, though philosopher and friar would reach their goal

by separate paths. It is remarkable that many of the most intimate Medicean circle were affected by the Savonarolist movement in its early stages. Pico, Benivieni, Ficino himself, welcomed its leader. Lorenzo's *confidant*, Pier Filippo Pandolfini, with other leaders of the administrative and diplomatic class, was afterwards reckoned as of the friar's party. Botticelli, Piero di Cosimo, the young Michelangelo, and others of the artist group became his followers. It is possible that had Lorenzo not been the head of his house, and had he lived, he might have been a Piagnone. Did he turn away because he had great possessions? It is certain that he was attracted by the friar. If the relations of the Medici to the convent of San Marco be considered, it is improbable that Savonarola was elected Prior in spite of Lorenzo's wish. Savonarola's biographers admit that the ruler showed every disposition towards personal friendship, that he walked in the garden in the hope that the Prior would join him, that in spite of the studied discourtesy which Savonarola mistook for independence, he continued his liberal donations to the house. He admitted, if he did not summon, the Dominican to his death-bed.

Some of Savonarola's methods Lorenzo as a practical ruler disliked. From the time of the White Penitents wandering prophets had been a source of trouble to town governments. Preaching against usury, moreover, was distasteful to commercial states, leading sometimes to excesses against the Jews. In 1458 an Observantine Franciscan was expelled the city for stirring popular passion against the hated

ace in defiance of the prohibition of the Archbishop Antonino. In 1487 another Observantine had exemporised a guild of boys to aid his crusade against sury, with the result that a mob of two thousand ouths attacked the Jews' houses. Even the more oderate demand of Fra Bernardino for a governent pawn-broking office found scant sympathy ith citizens who had capital to lend. Italy was in very critical condition, a small dispute might lead o general conflagration, and that to foreign intention. Savonarola's prophecies of doom were recisely of that kind which work out their own fulment. Yet Lorenzo would not openly interfere; e instructed several leading citizens to advise the iar, as from themselves, to abandon the future for ie present. Savonarola's own better judgment was ith Lorenzo, but he could not abstain from prophcy, and the ruler said no more. Much has been ade of the political opposition which, under Savoarola's influence threatened Lorenzo's later years. here is, however, no trustworthy evidence to show at the Dominican had any thought, or the Medici y fear, of this. Lorenzo's power with the Pope ould have secured Savonarola's removal at any oment. Even Piero furthered the separation of ie Tuscan from the Lombard Congregation, which one gave the Prior of San Marco a permanent foothold. In the lives of all great men, in the lives of ints especially, there is an irresistible impulse to ntedate.*

* Professor Villari, while emphasising the religious dualism been the two great men, lays no stress upon political opposition.

Under Lorenzo's rule were born at Florence two great political thinkers, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, who both wrote within a quarter of a century of his death. Their attitude towards him is so different that it requires some words of explanation. Why did Machiavelli, in addressing his *Principe* to a son and grandson of Lorenzo make so little mention of this great member of their house? His work has for its subject the formation and preservation of a new state, for its object the unity of Italy and its recovery from the barbarians. Yet there is scarcely a reference to one of the two founders of the Tuscan State which existed to the French Revolution well-nigh as they had left it, to the statesman who did more than any man to keep Italy at peace, to make her realise her nationality, her exclusiveness as against the foreigner. Why again are Guicciardini's speculative writings full of references to the character of Lorenzo's rule? For this difference were responsible the few violent years which had changed many things, and had produced two currents of opinion, distinct to the present day.

Machiavelli believed only in the possibility of national existence by the means of political unity, and the foreign invasions had convinced him that the State could only be surely founded upon arms; Italy, to be free, must be united, and must be a military nation. Lorenzo's aim had been the maintenance of the balance of power between the five greater Italian states, which was the antithesis of political unity. He had striven rather to disband than to enrol Italian armies, he had relied for the

protection of his State on fortresses and auxiliaries, n Machiavelli's view two broken reeds which pierced he ruler's hand.

For Guicciardini, on the other hand, Lorenzo's nethods possess a constant fascination; throughout is political writings he is forever harping on the eriod of his rule. Machiavelli was a philosopher nd, in spite of his own assurance, an idealist. Guicciardini was a diplomat and an opportunist. He did not believe in the possibility of Italian unity, or yet in its desirability. This would imply the acrifice of one province to another, it would be ramping and alien to the Italian genius, for her rovinces were naturally distinct in character. His emedy was rather a rough federation of states gainst the foreigner, that very balance of power of hich Lorenzo was not the creator but the apostle. A thorough diplomat, moreover, he thought less of rms than of policy; he would rather that Italy hould steer a course between the "Scylla and harybdis" of France and Spain, than run her bows gainst them. To use modern terms, Machiavelli as a Unionist, Guicciardini a Particularist. Lorenzo, s the ruler of Florence, the least military state, ould hope for an hegemony in Italian intellect and entiment, he could not aspire to political and mili- ary supremacy. Such fortune was reserved for the ynasty which, in the fifteenth century at least, pos- essed the smallest share of the gifts of Italian ivilisation.

There is a tragic element in the death of nearly very prince who played a part in Lorenzo's history.

Galeazzo Maria Sforza was murdered at the church door; the fate of his son was ascribed to his uncle's poison; of his brothers one died of wounds, another was drowned, while Ludovico Moro languished to death in a French prison. Alfonso fled from Naples with the cries of France ringing in his ears, and in an agony of remorse and fear entered the Sicilian monastery, where he died. His gentle brother, Lorenzo's friend, passed the long years of his later life in exile. Sixtus IV. had lived on war, and was killed by the news of peace. Of the Pope's nephews who had jostled with Lorenzo for pride of place, the friar fell an early victim to his own excesses, the customs clerk was hacked and hurled from his window by his Captain of the Guard. Lorenzo's own heir was sunk with his cannon in the Garigliano in the flood of flight. Such were the violent contrasts to which the land of the arts of peace was subjected.

Lorenzo had different fortune from his fellows. He died in his house and in his bed, and he died of gout, as many a commonplace man before and since. Yet nothing that relates to Lorenzo is quite devoid of interest. The stamp of personality, which has given abiding life to the weak-eyed, plain-featured, hoarse-throated citizen, left its impress even on the death-bed. Towards the end of March, 1492, Lorenzo, who had been very ill, was taken to Careggi. There he lay in the modest room which overlooks the garden and the plain which leads the eye to Florence. Bianca, his favourite sister, and Politian shared the watching by the bedside. To the former it fell to break the news that hope was

over. "Brother, you have lived till this day as a true gentleman. You must die not only as a gentleman but as a Christian. You must know that there is now no hope." In the evening the priest came with the *viaticum*. Lorenzo would not receive the sacrament in bed; he struggled to the door, and falling on his knees before the priest he cried, "I will not suffer that my Lord and God should thus come to me." He received the sacrament in such reverent and penitent sorrow that the bystanders could not hold their tears.

A few days yet passed before the end. Lorenzo prayed Piero to hold the public welfare higher than his own, to be a father to his youngest brother. To Giovanni was entrusted his little nephew Giulio. Hope for a moment was revived by the arrival of Ludovico Moro's doctor, Lazaro, who prepared an elixir from pulverised pearls and jewels. The remedy was in full accordance with the Platonic philosophy of the day, but it had as little efficacy as the heliotrope stone worn next the skin, which had been pressed on the sufferer as an infallible specific. Lorenzo asked for Pico della Mirandola in some distress; the distance, he feared, from Florence to Careggi had kept him from the bedside. When Pico came he prayed him to forgive the trouble, he should die more happily when he had seen him once again. As he talked with the young noble and Politian the old interests revived, he regretted that he should not live to complete Politian's library, and to see the *codices* which Lascaris was bringing back from Greece.

Pico had scarcely left the room when the Prior of San Marco arrived. In few death chambers can four such characters as the dying man, Politian, Pico, and Savonarola have been present within the lapse of a score of minutes. To the dramatist who would ring down the curtain on a telling tableau Lorenzo's closing scene is a hopeless task. To the historian, it is not inappropriate that in the last meeting of the greatest living representatives of culture and religion there should be a conflict of authority on the facts. The biographer must tell both tales—the tale of Politian, which is the epilogue of Lorenzo's story; the tale of Cinozzi, which is the prologue of the Savonarola legend. Between the two it is for the reader to make his choice.* The Humanist and the Hagiologist each had an interest in his version. Politian professed to be an eye-witness; he wrote to a private friend some two months after the event; but Politian's Latin letters were intended for publication. Cinozzi repeats his story from Fra Silvestro, who professed to have heard it from his master's

* English readers will find this thorny question discussed in Villari's *Life and Times of Savonarola*, vol. i., and in Creighton's *History of the Papacy*, vol. iii., App. 7. The story of Cinozzi is supported by the *Biografia Latina* of Savonarola, which also quotes Fra Silvestro as the authority. In Politian's favour is a letter of Benedetto Dei, who seems to have had singularly close information as to Lorenzo's last days. This was written to a private friend within a week of Lorenzo's death, and is a direct contradiction to Cinozzi's account of his miserable end. "He died so nobly, with all the patience, the reverence, the recognition of God, which the best of holy men, and a soul divine could show, with words upon his lips so kind that he seemed a new St. Jerome." It will be noticed that Lorenzo's remains rested before his funeral in Savonarola's monastery.

lips. He wrote in all honesty, but many events had passed, the aspects of Lorenzo's reign had changed, Savonarola had become the people's saint and martyr.

First, then, for Politian's tale. Savonarola on entering the room exhorted the dying man to keep the faith. This, he replied, he held unshaken. He must resolve henceforth to lead the purest life. This he would earnestly strive to do. If death must come, he must bear it bravely. Nothing was pleasanter than death, was the answer, if God so willed. Savonarola had turned to leave when Lorenzo cried, "Oh, father, your blessing before you go!" And then with downcast head to Savonarola's prayer he answered from memory word for word, no whit disturbed by the grief which his friends could not now conceal. It seemed to be the death warrant of all except Lorenzo.

So far Politian's version of some few lines. The biographer of Savonarola is more elaborate. Lorenzo lay dying in agonies of remorse and terror; the consolations of the Church had for him no value, for he knew that they had been bought, the churchmen had refused him nothing. Then he bethought him of the friar who had resisted threats and blandishments. "I know no honest friar save this," he cried, and forthwith sent for Savonarola. When the Prior entered Lorenzo said that three sins lay heavy on his conscience, of which he prayed to be absolved, the sack of Volterra, the robbery of the "Monte delle doti," and the bloody vengeance on the Pazzi. Lorenzo's agitation touched the friar, who answered 'God is good; God is merciful." But he added:

"Three things are needful." "What things, father?" Savonarola's face grew stern. "Firstly a living faith in God's mercy." "In that I have the fullest faith." "Secondly you must restore your ill-gotten wealth or direct your son to restore it in your name." Lorenzo with an effort nodded his assent. Then Savonarola rising seemed to soar above his full stature, while the prince cowered before him in his bed. "Lastly you must restore liberty to Florence." Lorenzo collected his remaining strength, and angrily turned his back without uttering a word. The friar left his presence. Lorenzo, tortured by remorse, soon after breathed his last.

It is little, perhaps, to us whether Lorenzo's friend deliberately lied, or Savonarola's worshipper unconsciously exaggerated. To many minds absolution could matter little if it depended on the promise of a dying man to give back a liberty which he had not stolen, and which he was powerless to restore. The admirers of the two great men may afford to disregard both tales. The duel is between the seconds rather than the principals. It may be conceded that Savonarola had the religious courage to beard the tyrant on his death-bed, and that Lorenzo, whose political courage had never failed him, could turn his back upon a demand which to him would seem as impertinent as it was impossible.

From Careggi Lorenzo's body was removed to San Marco, and was thence carried by the clergy of San Lorenzo to the family grave in the old sacristy. The funeral was scrupulously simple in accordance with his strict instructions. He would not on his death

imperil the fortunes of his house by flaunting the externals of a supremacy which in his life he had sedulously concealed. Lorenzo has no monument, he was laid beneath the sarcophagus which Verrocchio had fashioned for his father.*

The people were strangely excited by their ruler's death. A day or two before it, the lightning had struck the lantern of the cupola of the cathedral, and great marble blocks had fallen through the roof upon the pavement. It was said that when the dying man had heard that the flash had descended on the Careggi

* Until 1886 the remains of Lorenzo and Giuliano were believed to rest in the Old Sacristy. Attention was then called to a letter of Vasari, stating that they were removed in 1559 to the New Sacristy, and buried in front of the altar. To verify this statement the Minister of Public Instruction appointed a committee to open the tomb in the New Sacristy above which stand the Madonna of Michelangelo and other statues. Here on October 2, 1895, were found two wooden coffins. On the one was written in ink "Giuliano di Piero di Cosimo de' Medici. Within was a skeleton with the knees drawn up towards the neck. On the skull were the marks of two cuts, with those of another on the shin. The second coffin, lying beneath this and broken by it, contained a skeleton with its consistency almost destroyed. This is unquestionably that of Lorenzo, as it is known that the bodies were removed together, while the skull exactly corresponds with the well known features of Lorenzo's bust. Professor Villari, one of the official witnesses, has kindly communicated the following description: "The forehead is low, the mouth projecting, the back part of the skull much developed; the facial angle, however, is almost straight, but for the projection of the mouth." This projection is described elsewhere as an osseous formation beneath the nose, a characteristic feature of Lorenzo's face. The remains of the brothers were placed in new coffins, and restored to the sarcophagus in the New Sacristy. The coffin of Giuliano with its inscription has been placed in the Museum.

side, he recognised that the end was come. Men's minds were all agog for portents. Vulgar superstition combined with classical pedantry to stimulate the imagination, to make all nature play its part in the notable catastrophe. Lorenzo must needs die amid the prodigies which Livy had lavished on his heroes. The lions caged as emblems of the republic's power fought fiercely, and a magnificent beast was killed. A comet spread its trail over Careggi, and wolves were heard to howl. In Santa Maria Novella a woman shrieked that a bull with blazing horns was burning all the city. Real tragedy was added to melodramatic terrors. Lorenzo's physician, Pier Leone, had never believed that he would die; the Milanese doctor on his arrival declared that the previous treatment was mistaken, that whereas the patient needed refrigeratives, the remedies given had been calorific. On his master's death Pier Leone lost his reason. Taken to the Martelli villa and kindly treated he would neither speak nor answer. On the following morning begging for a towel he went to the well to wash, he asked a peasant what was the depth of water, and then stayed leaning against the parapet of the well. Shortly afterwards a woman who went to draw water saw him head downwards in the well. The people in their indignation said that his fate served the unskilful doctor right, and in a few days the rumour grew that he had poisoned his master, and in revenge had been murdered and thrown into the well by order of Lorenzo's heirs. These tales have made this a debated subject until the present time, and a modern French author has

clinched the question by the argument that doctors kill others, not themselves!

There can be little doubt as to the popular regret. It is admitted by Rinuccini, who takes it as the text for his diatribe on Lorenzo's rule. "The multitude," he writes, "regarded the prodigies which preceded his death as prognostics of great evil, they would have been the presage of great good, had the citizens known how to use their opportunity." Guicciardini's more definite estimate may probably be accepted as correct. "A few of those who had been kept under rejoiced, but in the governing class, even among those whom Lorenzo had made to feel the weight of his displeasure, the grief was great. And yet more poignant was the sorrow of the city at large and of the poorer classes, whom he maintained in abundance, and amused with pleasure and festivals without end. Very great too was the grief of all in Italy who excelled in literature, in painting, sculpture, and such like arts. Either they were employed by him to their great advantage, or they were held in more repute by other princes who feared that if they did not pay them court, they would leave them for Lorenzo's service."

Within a week of Lorenzo's death official expression was given to the public sorrow. The Signoria and the Colleges combined with the four Councils in an address of condolence to his sons, which was carried by 483 votes to 63. Piero, though below the lawful age, was qualified for all the offices which his father held, or might have held, the Seventy, the Eight, the twelve Procurators, the Accoppiatori, the

Boards of Works for the Palace and Cathedral. But it was tacitly recognised that he had an undefined authority greater than the sum of these state magistracies. The voting, be it remembered, was secret, and this result may be believed to have fairly represented the feeling of the citizens who were qualified for government, for it was difficult to pack the larger Councils.

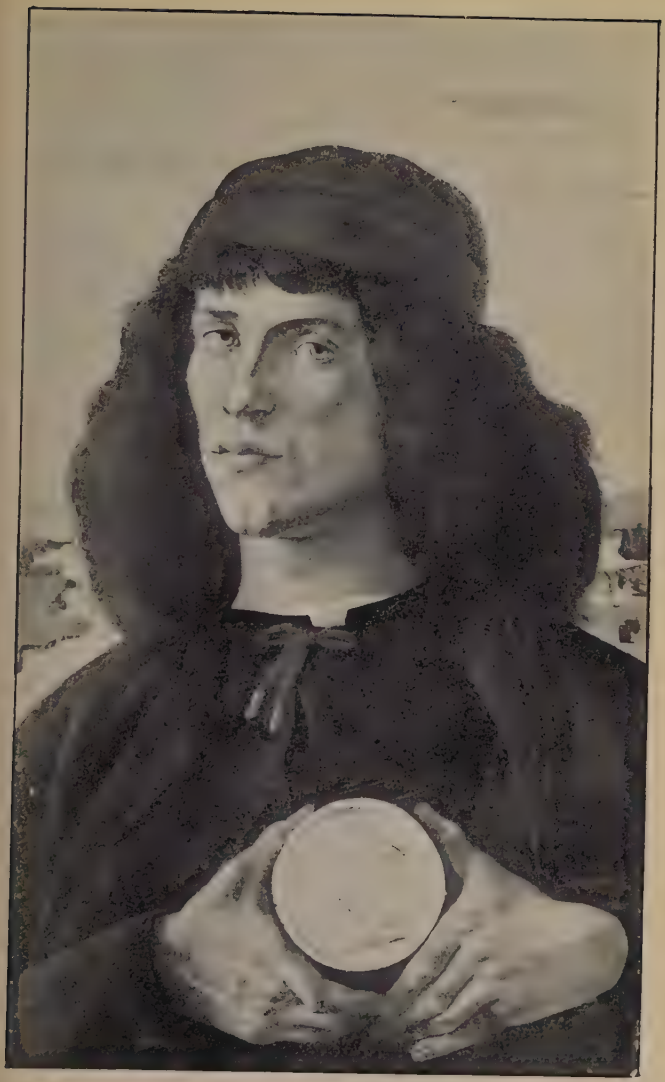
Lorenzo owes his great reputation as a statesman in some part to the disasters which followed close upon his death. Italians looked back to his later days when he maintained the peace of Italy, keeping Alfonso and Ludovico Moro from each other's throats, when war was a pretty game save to the peasants whose fields lay in the path of the condottieri, when in the great cities, at all events, the worst that could befall was an increase in the taxes. Florentines looked back with pride to their citizen who, in the words of Landucci—no Medicean,—was "the most glorious man that could be found, the richest, the most powerful, the most esteemed, of whom all men said that he guided Italy, for indeed his head was wise, and every scheme of his had good success." All this was over. Plundering Frenchmen, drunken clownish Swiss and Germans, bloodthirsty Spanish savages ransacked every corner of Italy, imposing their barbarism by the aid of the most modern appliances of warfare. Florence was left without an ally in Italy, without a citizen who had credit outside her walls, trembling at the approach of Vitelli,—she who had beaten back the great Visconti.

Could Lorenzo have stayed the flood? The interest of the "might have been" may be illusory, yet this had a fascination for Lorenzo's immediate successors and may reasonably attract ourselves, for the consequences of the barbarian invasions were so momentous and so permanent that they affect the Europe of to-day. The question thus deserves discussion. The balance between the Italian states was so delicate that even under Lorenzo's skilful handling it was liable to derangement. It was certain that one prince or other would sooner or later beg for foreign aid and receive response. Yet everything depended on the how and when. In 1494, four or five states were peculiarly unlucky in their government. Alfonso was a poor soldier and a poorer diplomat, Piero de' Medici had no pretension of being either; the shifty craft of Ludovico Moro was yet more dangerous to himself than to others; the Borgia displayed his later violence without his later competence. One good brain might have saved the system from disruption. At the last moment the Cardinal della Rovere rather than Ludovico determined the French invasion. The Cardinal had been a friend to Florence, his views on Italian politics coincided with Lorenzo's; the latter would hardly have allowed the breach between Pope and Cardinal to go so far.

Had there been in France, according to the picturesque visions of modern historians, an irresistible tendency to enjoy its newly won unity, in pushing to the land of the sun, of art and wealth, the push could not have been withstood. But the evidence is over-

whelming that this and subsequent invasions were unpopular in France. The face of Europe was changed by two third-rate counsellors, against the will of every strong head in France. Could not the influence of Lorenzo, who knew French politics by heart, have sufficed to turn the scale? Future history proved that of the two French claims in Italy that of the house of Orleans to Milan was far more dangerous than that of the house of Anjou to Naples, and neither was dangerous but that each in turn became merged in the French crown. Savonarola held the death of Charles VIII. and his offspring to be the punishment for the betrayal of his trust. However this may be, the slightest accidents turn great events, and who can say that, had Charles been kept in France, he would not have reared his children, and then the fatal claim to Milan would have lost its sting.

The older heads of the Medicean party regarded the tragedy as due to Piero's desertion of his father's principles, to the defiance of France, to the close alliance with Naples and the Pope, which drove Ludovico to despair. Even had Lorenzo adopted this alliance to resist the foreigner the military result might well have differed. If he was no soldier, he was certainly no coward. Comines is of opinion that the French could never have gained the road to Pisa but for the craven surrender of Sarzana and Pietra Santa. It is improbable that Lorenzo would have yielded without a blow the two chief acquisitions of his house, which he himself had made, as was believed, impregnable. The warlike



PIERO DE' MEDICI THE YOUNGER.

He holds a medal of his great grandfather Cosimo. Portrait by Sandro Botticelli in the Uffizi Gallery.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

heat of Charles VIII. might have evaporated in the mountains of the Lunigiana, as did that of Maximilian a few years later in the passes of the Julian Alps. Much moreover depended upon time. A year more and France might have been involved in the conflict with Spain for Roussillon, or with Maximilian for Burgundy or Artois. The Somme, the Jura, and the Pyrenees might well have been the main scene of European war instead of the Apennines and the Po.

Within Florence Lorenzo's loss was equally felt. Monarchy had become a necessity, and there was no one fit to be a monarch. The Medicean ring had at length broken, the oligarchical element had this time conquered the monarchical. There was now none to stand between the pretensions of the aristocratic families and the rising feeling of democracy. The oligarchy, as always, split within itself. The Capponi, the Valori, the Soderini scrambled for power, while even within the household there was dissension between the Secularist and the Savonarolist principles.

Under Lorenzo's rule there had been little bloodshed. The Pazzi had suffered cruelly, but they had been caught red-handed. Public conscience was shocked when the later Republic put the veteran Bernardo del Nero, and the brilliant young Tornabuoni, whatever might be their guilt, to death without appeal in defiance of its fundamental law; when Savonarola and his associates were burnt, and Valori, the leader of his party, was massacred by a mob which did not even spare his wife. Under

Lorenzo the administration was never so incompetent that it was forced, as was the Republic, to treacherously arrest and execute its own general. The monarchical principle must after all be restored, and thus Soderini was hoisted amid popular applause into the very life-Gonfalonierate which Lorenzo had been accused of wishing to assume. But what a sorry substitute was the honest, ambitious, indispensable citizen, who never refused an office, never accepted responsibility, who, when the crisis came, met it with well-nigh as little courage as Piero himself. Meanwhile, moreover, it was realised that the Medici had held the State together. Sarzana, Pietra Santa, Montepulciano, even Pisa were lost. Arezzo and the whole Chiana Valley in full revolt, while some of the towns opened their gates to the Medici, because they were the lawful masters.

It has been said, indeed, that had Lorenzo continued to rule both house and State must have been bankrupt. Yet extravagant as he was, at least the money was spent mainly within the State. Agriculture throve, Pisa regained somewhat of her life, all those who ministered to use and comfort never lacked for work. All this again was over. When once the momentary excitement of religious revival and political reform had passed the people clamoured for bread, they could not be fed by sermons. The rich *bourgeois* under Lorenzo found his taxes rising, but meantime he was growing richer. The volume of Florentine trade had never, perhaps, been larger than in the latter days of Lorenzo's life. Bankruptcies there were from over-speculation and high

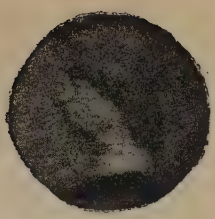
living, dishonest tampering with the State funds and the coinage, but actual distress was greater from the taxation raised to recover the lost Pisa, and the constant drain to finance the French troops in Italy, to bribe them with money which was used against the briber. Florence under its new Republic was possibly more free, it is doubtful if she were happier or better.

Lorenzo was no ideal statesman, but he was one of the greatest of opportunists. He understood the moment and moved with it, and so could modify its course. In his rule there was one great flaw. This was not tyranny, nor corruption, nor any fault for which he was responsible, but the want of a constitutional position corresponding to his power. Monarchy was necessary and existent but unrecognised. The Medici influence was so completely personal that it needed a personality. A weak or violent successor must necessarily fall, he could neither be controlled by the traditional checks to which a recognised monarchy, however arbitrary, is subject, nor bolstered up by its hereditary supports. The uncertainty of heredity is the disease of all despotic monarchy, but the Medici suffered from it in its acutest form. Piero II. was both weak and violent; in developing to his excess his physical faculties he had lost his moral courage; the "brutal athlete" was a coward. Had Giovanni been the elder brother the interregnum might never have occurred. As soon as Piero was drowned it became certain that the Cardinal, who was his father's son, would some day return to his father's seat. When

as Leo X. he ambled on his palfrey through Florence to her Cathedral the people greeted him with joy as genuine as was the sorrow with which it had followed Lorenzo's bier from San Marco to San Lorenzo.

Guicciardini.

Rinuccini.



Pico della Mirandola—Politian.

CHAPTER IX.

Literature of the Medicean period—The writers of Lorenzo's age—His own works—University of Pisa—Introduction of printing.

1466–1492.

FLORENCE had from the first been a centre, perhaps the chief centre, of the new tendency in learning, which passes under the name of Humanism. That tendency implied a reversion to classical civilisation, a reaction against the barbarism in thought and language, ascribed to the Teutonic invasion, which had corrupted the founts of Italian speech, and dammed back the flow of European intellect. It is impossible either in literature or in art to lay the finger on the origin of this movement. Even outside the traditional learning of the Church, classical literature had long had its influence on individuals. Its power, however, had been rather mechanical than chemical: it had added new subjects and new sentiments, but had scarcely combined with and modified the character of thought. Dante was steeped in Latin literature, yet Dante was no Humanist; there is for him no essen-

tial difference between the heroes of antiquity, and those of the dark ages or his own. On the other hand Petrarch has with some reason been called the first modern man. He consciously realised what the function of classical literature was to be; he drew a precise line between ancient and modern history, between Romanic and Teutonic periods of thought. Petrarch, too, systematically pursued that recovery of classical MSS. which was an essential instrument to the new learning.

To some extent the Humanism of the first half of the fifteenth century was a retrogression from the methods of Petrarch and Boccaccio. These two writers had sometimes realised that the Classics were to be a means rather than an end, that their highest function was the refinement of the Italian tongue, the expansion rather than the extinction of living modes of thought and feeling. Nevertheless it is with the fifteenth century that Humanism is popularly associated. The closing years were clouded by the death or fall of the princely patrons of the movement, Federigo of Urbino, Lorenzo de' Medici, Ludovico Moro, Alphonso II. Between 1494 and 1500 died the greatest Florentine representatives, Politian, Pico, and Ficino; Pontano, the chief figure of the Neapolitan school, barely outlived the century. The first year, moreover, was a birthday in the life of literature, for in 1400 Florence had given its welcome to Chrysolaras. He was the first Greek of real learning who taught his language in Italy, and all future Hellenists might call themselves his pupils. Before half the century had

CRISTOFERO LANDINO AND HIS CLASS.

From the frontispiece to "Formulario di lettere e di orationi volgari composte per Cristofero Landini." Printed by Miscomini in 1492.

passed Greek was the common possession of most Italian scholars; at the Councils of Bâle and Florence the Greek fathers found that Italian Humanists knew more of their language and literature than they did themselves. Henceforth the most learned men of Greece, George of Trebizond, Bessarion, Argyropulos, Lascaris, found their career in the West. Travellers such as Aurispa and Ciriaco ransacked Eastern Europe for Greek MSS. The fall of Constantinople was of consequence only as retarding rather than quickening the movement. She yielded up to Italy a few of her treasures, and some of her men of learning, but the Turk had slain the goose with the golden egg.

The Italian Renaissance has often been identified with the revival of Greek learning, but this is an exaggeration of Greek influence. The new movement in art and letters would have run a very similar course without Greek aid, except in so far as Hellenism had affected Roman methods. The essence of the Renaissance was the restoration of Italy to herself. The immediate contribution of Greek to the art of the fifteenth century was slight. In literature it was, however, greater; it probably saved Humanism from being more artificial, more barren, than it was. While the Humanists turned to Latin for their language, they resorted to the Greek writers for their thought. The revived interest in Aristotle, the new knowledge of Plato, the study of Greek poets and historians in the original opened a fair, wide field for intellectual exercise. The greatest function of the Humanist was the recovery, the in-

terpretation, the popularisation of the Classics, and for this the world can never be sufficiently grateful. Enthusiasm rose with each fresh discovery, with each new translation. In our own days scholars will long remember the excitement which greeted the unearthing of a fragment of Aristotle. This may enable us to realise the enthusiasm which thrilled through a more interested and cultivated circle when Aurispa brought 238 *codices* from Greece, or when Poggio Bracciolini discovered in quick succession in French or German monasteries, a portion of the Argonautica, a complete Quintilian, the Silvæ of Statius, the Punica of Silius Italicus, and ten orations of Cicero. Italy rejoiced over her treasures won back from the barbarian even as she rejoiced when Napoleon's pillage was restored to her. Cicero, the master of eloquence, was freed at last, cried Landino, from the barbarian's iron prisons. Rightly also the Humanists did not confine themselves to *codices*. They eagerly collected all that would bear on ancient life—gems, coins, and inscriptions; they early learned the rudiments of criticism. Poggio could shake belief in the tales called the Mirabilia of Rome, and Valla expose the Forged Decretals. Plato was now compared with Aristotle, Quintilian with Cicero, Homer with Virgil. Comparison led from an indiscriminate admiration of all things classical to the formation of a standard and to the distinction between the greater and the lesser Classics, to which modern education more ignorantly and more slavishly adheres. Admiration began to give place to fastidiousness; Filelfo assured a correspondent that neither among the

Greeks nor Latins had he found an author who entirely satisfied his taste.

Enthusiasts were not content with discovery, exposition, and criticism. They must needs compose, and they composed before they fully assimilated the language which was their model. Thus to modern taste the writings of the earlier Humanists are unreadable. There was little originality of thought or diction, no representation of the outer world, no expression of the sentiments of the inner man. Fulsome adulation alternated with indecent abuse. Poetry was drowned in a flood of personality, Italian was crushed by ponderous Latinism. The first half of the fifteenth century is not a creative period. Its more obvious products were moral treatises and formal letters modelled upon Cicero, elegies, epigrams, and interminable epics, histories in the style of Livy. Original enterprise was checked by the supposed necessity for translation. It was believed that a knowledge of Greek must be the possession of but the favoured few, and that the works of Greek authors must be popularised by translation into Latin. Thus Nicholas V. long absorbed the energies of the leading scholars by his scheme for a complete series of translations. The result was hardly worth the labour, for the object was less the exact representation of the original than a general presentation of its meaning in an attractive Latin style.

The most natural effusions of the Humanists were their scurrilous invectives. If the form was classic and the language dead, yet the tongue was vulgar and the hatred living. The causes of dispute might

be civic patriotism or devotion to a patron, more often personal jealousy, ending sometimes, as in the case of George of Trebizond and Poggio, in blows. The Humanists, the spoiled children of the century, were morbidly sensitive, they could not tolerate the kindliest criticism, and criticism was seldom kindly. A difference of opinion on the respective merits of Scipio and Cæsar, of Plato and Aristotle degenerated into the bandying to and fro of accusations, which ranged from murder, incest, and heresy to plagiarism and bad taste; the characters of the fathers, mothers, wives, and sisters of the rivals suffered equally with their own. Excessive stress must not be laid on these unseemly squabbles. Scurrility is the froth which enthusiasm gives to learning. Even in modern days the vituperation of historians, of scientists and Orientalists is the proof of genuine interest, while the increasing politeness of editors of the Classics marks too surely the decadence of classical tastes.

Fed though they were on classical literature, it would be wrong to imagine that the Humanists lived exclusively in the past, and failed to appreciate the importance of their age. They believed rather that Florence was another Athens, and her historians Poggio and Leonardo Aretino her Thucydides and Xenophon. Men of learning were not as now isolated from politics; on the contrary they began to monopolise diplomacy and the civil service. Humanism was a political instrument of no mean value. Briefs, despatches, speeches, must all be choice specimens of the new Latin. Gian Ga-

leazzo Visconti had declared that he feared a despatch of Salutati more than a thousand Florentine troopers. Manetti was congratulated on his speech of welcome to Pope Nicholas V., as though Florence had conquered Pisa. The new Latin took the place in the diplomacy of the fifteenth century which French occupied in a later age. No State function was complete without its Latin speeches. To the real admiration for learning there was an ignoble side. Princes and Humanists formed mutual-admiration societies. The latter hoped for comfort, the former for immortality. It was a distinction to a prince that his name should be attached to a scholar's work, whatever might be its character. The grave Cosimo gratefully accepted the dedication of a book so filthy that the Papacy, very properly, had it burnt, and no Italian could later be found to print it. Dedicatory Epistles became a popular form of art; they gave scope to the writer's mastery of Latin eloquence, they were handsomely rewarded and often bought; nor was literary blackmailing unknown to the less scrupulous of Humanists. Noble ladies followed or were foremost in the fashion, they would stand aside that a Filelfo should pass unjostled. The popularity of men of letters may usually be tested by the marriages which they can make. Poggio, when no longer young, married into the great house of Buondelmonte. Filelfo was twice dissuaded from taking orders by the offer of noble and well dowered wives. No wonder that Humanists held themselves in high esteem as the equals or superiors of their rulers. Can Grande della Scala, wrote Flavio Biondo,

was more celebrated for his relations to Dante than for all his exploits; King Robert of Naples was only known because he was the friend of Petrarch. Nor was it only princes who did homage to great scholars. Modern democracy would deprive the seats of learning of political privilege, while lavishing the franchise on illiterate voters, but the Florentine republic conferred its citizenship on Leonardo Bruni of Arezzo, and declared him and his heirs free of taxes for all time.

Affected as this period of literature might be, it was, perhaps, a necessary prelude to the formation of a literary Italian language. Without it great works of genius might have appeared, but a common Italian tongue rising above provincial *patois* could scarcely have been developed. It was not a foreign tongue that was foisted on a native language. The only case which is exactly parallel is the tendency to Classicism in Modern Greek. Italian, after all, was returning to its first principles, while Latin by the free use of diminutives and other means was being modified into Italian. The blend became a literary language. Nor must the aid derived from the study of Greek be underrated. No language perhaps can emerge into its literary stage without external help. The English of Chaucer required French assistance; the Elizabethan age accepted the aid of Italy and Spain. Roman literature absorbed Greek, Spanish literature Italian. The purest and most natural age of German prose and poetry owed much to the French influences which had preceded it. Even the French of the Grand Monarque was indebted largely to a classical revival.

Meanwhile there were symptoms of a vernacular reaction. The Church, always conservative, had throughout the dark ages kept the lamp of Latin traditions dimly burning. So now in the artificial age of the Renaissance it was within the Church that the vulgar tongue found refuge. The letters of Catherine of Siena have been regarded as models of Italian prose. The wave of religious feeling which made itself felt in the movement of the White Penitents, as a century later in that of Savonarola, had given an impetus to spiritual song. In the fifteenth century the hymns of men of culture, such as Feo Belcari and the Venetian noble Giustiniani showed that the national language was capable of high flights in poetry, and it is noticeable that Giustiniani's application of it to lighter secular verse won general and immediate appreciation. At the turning-point of the half century Leo Battista Alberti, ripe scholar as he was, set up the sign-post for the language of the future. His own great book on education, *La Cura della Famiglia*, he wrote in the vulgar tongue, and therein protested against the contempt for the Tuscan language. The fault, he wrote, lay not in the dialect but in the handling, nothing that was in daily use should be despised; the authority of Latin was due to its use by learned men, and Tuscan would serve their turn if they would give their pains to fashioning it. Ignorance, moreover, had its uses. Filippo Maria Visconti and Borso d'Este of Ferrara, neither of whom knew Latin, stimulated the use of the vernacular in their respective Courts.

It was at this moment and in this intellectual

atmosphere that Lorenzo came into being. The Medicean age has become a recognised phrase in literature as in art. Yet it cannot be said that Cosimo's accession entailed a marked change in the history of letters. The Albizzi had been highly cultivated. Under their *régime* the Humanists Salutati and Marsigli had handed on the traditions of Petrarch and Boccaccio. The former had been the Chancellor, the chief Secretary of State, of Florence, the leader of a long line of literary officials. The invitation of Chrysolaras to Florence was the work mainly of Palla Strozzi, a devoted adherent of the Albizzi, who contributed chiefly to the cost of the professorship. The Greek's pupil Guarino had taught from 1408 to 1414. The greatest Italian representative of Greek learning was Filelfo, and it was at Strozzi's instance that he became professor in 1429. The most violent partisan of the Albizzi, he had recommended that one man should die to heal the civic discord, and that one man was Cosimo. The young Albizzi and the young Medici received the self-same education. Rinaldo degli Albizzi entrusted his two sons to Tommaso of Sarzana, a life-long friend of the Medici. Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo were fellow pupils under Rossi with Rinaldo's brother Luca.

The effect indeed of the civic revolution was for a time to break up the band of humanistic enthusiasts. Palla Strozzi was exiled, and at Padua formed a new centre of classical studies. Manetti, the most cultivated of Florentine gentlemen, who had served the new learning as faithfully as he served the State,

was deliberately ruined by taxation and forced to flee from Florence. The neutral Agnolo Pandolfini, though personally a friend of Cosimo, retired in disgust to his villa at Signa, and would not allow politics to be mentioned in the brilliant literary circle which gathered round him. Filelfo naturally fled for his life, and there are wild stories, not altogether to be discredited, of mutual attempts at assassination. Scholarship was in danger of being forgotten in the fierce war of words which was waged between the great Hellenist and the Medicean adherents, Poggio and Marsuppini.

Notwithstanding these lamentable divisions Cosimo's rule proved, in the long run, of service to Florentine Humanism as giving to it a more definite centre. He had himself been admirably educated in Latin literature, his tastes were serious, he preferred the converse of men of learning to amusement, his intuition was as remarkable in literature as it was in art and politics. Learning, moreover, is a marketable commodity. Cosimo's wealth enabled him to buy professors, while his extensive foreign relations helped him to know and to command the market. Thus in 1456 he brought the Greek Argyropulos to Florence, where he trained a second generation of Hellenists. Poggio Bracciolini, already a devoted friend, settled permanently in Florence, becoming Chancellor in 1455. Cosimo again recognised the precocious genius of Marsilio Ficino, made him one of his own household, and employed him, while yet a youth, in the foundation of his Platonic Academy. Cosimo's influence won for Cristoforo Landino the

chair of eloquence and poetry, and to his care was committed in part the education of the young Lorenzo. Ungrudging aid, without hope of recompense, was given to many whose purses failed to meet their literary needs. Niccolò Niccoli, who had spent all his substance upon learning, was helped through his difficulties, and when the library, which he left for public benefit, was seized by his creditors Cosimo redeemed it, and applied it to its intended use. Long before the merchant prince's death Humanism had once more taken root in Florence. But learning is a tender tree which needs a stake of coarser, stronger fibre than itself.

If it is difficult to trace the boundaries of a Medicean age, the Laurentian epoch marks itself out with some distinctness, though it is linked to the earlier period by the two great names of Ficino and Landino, both of whom, moreover, outlived Lorenzo. Accidental circumstances contributed to distinguish this quarter of a century of Florentine letters. The leaders of the older generation of Humanists were dead. The years between 1457 and 1463 had witnessed the disappearance of Valla, Poggio Bracciolini, Aurispa, Guarino, Flavio Biondo. Filelfo still lived but was far from Florence; the courtly Humanists of Milan and Naples, even when of Tuscan origin, held jealously aloof. On the other hand, the literary life of Politian, the greatest of the Laurentian group, is exactly conterminous with the reign of his master, whom he survived by but two years. Nevertheless the peculiar stamp of the Laurentian epoch is mainly due to the impress of Lorenzo's personality. Lo-

renzo was of a less serious disposition than his grandfather; pure learning for its own sake did not satisfy his needs. He was marvellously versatile and eminently natural, Tuscan rather than Florentine, a lover of country rather than of town, ready to ransack all the pleasures of life and not shrinking from their less refined forms. Whenever he was able, he would escape to Poggio a Caiano, or more distant villas. He was fond of country-people, their manners, their songs, their pleasures. He loved to initiate revivals of old Tuscan life with its Maypoles and its dances, and country sports. So, too, within the city he threw himself into the popular amusements, displaying, not jealousy, but favour towards the half-religious, half-grotesque, festivities of the guilds, and himself organising the Saturnalia of the Carnival, wherein he could trace the germs of popular song and drama, accentuating perhaps the sensuous, amusing side of the great festival. Yet in all this there was no open breach with the classical revival. Lorenzo, indeed, might fairly have urged that he was completing it; as his predecessors had restored Latin letters, so he was reviving Latin life, for in the lower classes, and above all in the country folk, were found the legitimate children of Etrusco-Roman forefathers. It is true that in this revival, as in all such movements, there was some artificiality, some affectation, yet artistic affectation has its peculiar charm.

To such a nature the Classicism of existing literature must seem monotonous; a revival of popular language was antecedently a certainty. Lorenzo

very early struck the key. In 1466 he wrote to Federigo of Naples his remarkable defence of the vulgar tongue, and this he afterwards elaborated. A language, he urged, which is fitted for literary use must be capable of expressing all modes of thought, and it must possess sweetness and harmony; such harmony is indeed relative to that which exists in the individual soul and body, and its possession is therefore a matter of opinion; those who are best able to receive this harmony are best able to decide, however few they be, for men's judgments are rather to be weighed than counted. That the Tuscan tongue possessed these qualifications for literary use, Lorenzo proved by the examples of Dante and Cavalcanti, Petrarch and Boccaccio. Dante for his harmony, and for his mastery over the three grades of style, he placed above the Classics, Greek or Latin, while Petrarch he preferred to Ovid, to Tibullus, to Catullus, or Propertius. Of late it was not the tongue that had failed the men, but the men who had been lacking to the tongue. A language, confessed Lorenzo, to be completely successful must be aided by external fortune. Might not therefore the Tuscan tongue, so graceful in its youth, contain yet greater perfection in its fuller growth, if only the citizens of Florence would put forth all their strength to extend the empire of their native city. This recognition of the close relationship between linguistic and political revival is extremely striking, it is perhaps the complete expression of Lorenzo's aims, the spread of Tuscan song by the exploits of Tuscan arms; Italy should find its unity in its most cultivated dialect.

If, however, we compare this sentiment with Machiavelli's appeal to Lorenzo's grandson which forms the epilogue of *The Prince*, it will be found that while to the man of letters arms are all in all, in the ruler the literary interest is the stronger.

This being Lorenzo's natural bent, he could not have been more fortunate in his teachers. Landino and Marsilio Ficino were among the ripest of Latin and Greek scholars, yet neither despised the vulgar tongue, and both had for Dante ungrudging admiration. Ficino, at Lorenzo's wish, translated the *De Monarchia* into Italian, while Landino had already devoted himself to those studies which in later days bore fruit in his great commentary on the *Commedia*. Lorenzo was thus well schooled in Latin and Greek learning, and yet was neither unduly checked in his natural inclination, nor forced to revolt against scholarly method. Henceforth Latin assumed its proper place, adding refinement to Italian, establishing a standard of taste, making language and literature scientific, while not forcing it to be artificial. Lorenzo could combine the finest classical culture with a living interest in all forms of the vernacular. He profited by Landino's precept that to write Italian a man must be a Latinist. If English speaking be substituted for Italian writing Lord Chatham's theory of education was Landino's.

It was not a court but a coterie which gathered round Lorenzo. He of all men could be a patron without patronising. The society was a little aristocracy of letters, and all its members stood on equal ground. The correspondence of Lorenzo with his

literary friends proves the perfect familiarity of their intercourse. This was due in some measure to the fact that Lorenzo and his brother had grown up within the circle of the Platonic Academy, membership of which was the blue riband of cultivated society. The element of loaves and fishes was, except in the instance of Politian, little prominent. Lorenzo's two teachers received scarcely more than a living wage. To artists and men of letters he afforded shelter, but he did not ruin them with wealth. He was, to use their favourite phrase, the laurel which was their refuge. Great as was the influence of the older men, Lorenzo's many sides required many literary friends, each to satisfy a separate instinct of his nature. Thus Ficino and Landino provide the philosophic thought, Politian contributes the highest results of scholarship and style, Pulci and Matteo Franco the ready flow of mirth and irony, in which Lorenzo, jovial and cynical, delighted. And to these must be added Pico della Mirandola, who to his own age seemed the living embodiment of all that others thought and wrote. No biography of Lorenzo could be complete without some treatment of the members of this group.

The long and bitter struggle between the adherents of Aristotle and of Plato had ended somewhat in favour of the latter. To this victory Petrarch had contributed, and the enthusiasm which Gemistos Plethon, the Greek Platonist, had inspired in Italy had struck, perhaps, the decisive stroke. It was Sigismondo Malatesta's proudest boast that he had

MARSILIO FICINO.

Portrait bust by Antonio Ferrucci in the Cathedral at Florence.

(*From a photograph by Erogi.*)

brought Plethon's bones from Greece to rest in their urn in a niche of the pantheon which Alberti raised at Rimini. Partly it was that Aristotle seemed to be the champion of the old despised scholastic methods, and Plato the apostle of the exuberant new learning, partly that Plato's wealth of ornament satisfied the æsthetic impulse of the young Renaissance, whilst a generation that was rather conversational than precise, found its method and its model in his dialogue. Plato's triumph was celebrated by Cosimo's institution of a Platonic Academy at Florence, and of this he designed Marsilio Ficino to be the high-priest; Marsilio could be the healer of souls as his father, Cosimo's physician, was of bodies. His work was the translation of Plato into Latin, and for this purpose he was settled in the little farm of Montevecchio, near Careggi. The first readings had been the religious consolation of Cosimo on his death-bed, Piero continued to favour the young Platonist, and Lorenzo dearly loved his tutor. Ficino with true friendship would rebuke his former pupil for his lapses from that higher virtue which became the Christian and the Platonist, for his desertion of spiritual joys for the pleasures of the senses, which ruined health and obscured the divine light within the soul. Lorenzo in turn leaned upon his master's guidance. "Write to me," he said in 1473, "whatever enters your head, for nothing ever comes from you that is not good, you never have an unworthy thought. Everything that you write must be either useful or agreeable. What makes me long for your letters is the combination of grace of ex-

pression with solidity of contents, they satisfy one's every need."

Although Ficino was brought into notice by Cosimo, his works chiefly belong to the Laurentian age. The translation of Plato was not finished until towards 1477, and then he undertook Plotinus. Not content with translating and commenting, Ficino set himself the task of systematising and popularising the philosophy of his originals. In Ficino's Platonism there is, however, very little Plato. He and his circle preferred the elaborate eclecticism of the Alexandrian Neo-Platonists, who had professedly summed up all Greek philosophy, and yet produced a body of doctrines metaphysical, ethical, theological, which differed widely from any and all of the sources from which they were derived. Ficino believed that the gold conferred by God upon Plato was hardly visible until tested and sifted in the laboratory of Plotinus and his followers. Even Plotinus was too simple, not sufficiently fanciful and dogmatic, for the Florentine Academy.

Ficino's object was to explain to his fellow-citizens the relation between the unity and plurality of Nature, between the absolute and the finite, between rest and motion, between God and man and lower nature, between soul, intellect, and matter. The conception of God was formed from the abstraction of all forms of perfection, but God was unity unmoved from which everything proceeded and towards which everything struggled to return. From the divine unity there was a descending scale, through the angels, the immovable multiplicity, to the

rational soul, to the qualities of matter, and to formless shifting matter. But Soul itself was multiple, inherent not only in man, but in the four elements and the spheres, and the beings that dwelt within the spheres. It was the soul which reflected God's light on matter.

Whatever may be the metaphysical merit of these conceptions they had had much moral value. The soul did not belong to the higher immovable grades, but it had the power of motion within itself, it was the link between the sensuous and the spiritual, it could rise or fall, purify or corrupt itself, it was never beyond the possibility of conversion, and thus in practice a new power was given to the will. This doctrine of purification, of the necessity of rising above the senses, was of peculiar value amid the sensuous materialism of the fifteenth century when scepticism would throw off, together with the doctrines of the Church, its restraints upon the senses.

Ficino could compromise with the æsthetic spirit of the age in the doctrine of love and beauty. Beauty, wherever it is found, whether in angels, or in the human spirit, or in material objects, is the broken reflection, brighter or fainter, of the perfect simple beauty which is in God. It can be appreciated by the spirit, and of the senses by ear and eye alone. Thus man first learns to love God's traces in terrestrial things, and thus rises to love God and all things in God. Lust or the lower love is a disease, a corruption of blood tainted by the qualities of matter in the object loved. Thus though few could hope for the ecstasy, the absorption, the perfect

love of the mystics, yet all could hope to purify themselves by love, by the chaste contemplation of things of beauty. This, together with the doctrine of affinities, of common qualities in man and matter, contributed no doubt to that sympathy for lower life and inanimate nature which will be found to a marked degree in Lorenzo's writings. Here, too, descending through the medium of the Neo-Platonists, the Pythagorean ideas of numbers and of harmonies find their place. Earthly music is the echo of the music of the spheres, it brings divine sound to earth, and in hearing it the listener is led to strive up towards Godhead. Hence music took a high place in the Laurentian circle, whether it were Squarcialupi thundering on his organ, or Ficino soothing his natural melancholy with the lyre.

The sympathy with nature had its dangerous side in the belief in magic, in horoscopes and planetary influences, in amulets and charms, in the effect of gems, of lions' claws and adders' fangs, and other material objects upon men. It was not unlikely to descend to a gross nature worship, or at all events to reinforce that superstition, which goes hand in hand with scepticism, in the case of those who rejected the spiritual ethics of Platonism but clutched at its absurdities. This element in the doctrines of Ficino and his friends rose from the desire to incorporate all elements of truth in all religions or philosophies, to find a particle of light in the darkest superstition. As Neo-Platonism itself had summed up all Greek and much Oriental philosophy, so Ficino and his disciple Pico would trace a unity, a common principle

in all philosophies and all religions; Plato should embrace Aristotle, Christianity, Judaism. It is not surprising that the orthodox regarded the Platonic Academy with suspicion; yet Ficino was a genuine Christian. He took orders from conviction, when no longer young, and zealously performed his duties. He believed himself to be following Augustine in teaching that the doctrine of Plato was, with some slight differences, that of Christianity. He would strain his intellect in the search for similarities, striving to identify the souls of the spheres with the angels, the punishment of the wicked with hell, their purification with purgatory, explaining away the pre-existence and transmigration of souls. Religion was reinforced by philosophy, the Incarnation and the doctrine of the Trinity proved by reasoning. Philosophy in turn was derived from religion, for the truth which the ancient philosophers possessed had filtered through from Judaism; Pythagoras and Plato, Jew and Pagan, struggled towards heaven first through the hope, and then through the presence, of Christ. Contradictions, however, would necessarily occur, and then Ficino fearlessly sacrificed philosophy to faith, for the teaching of Christ and his disciples contained all that was necessary for belief. Thus, in spite of the reiterated theory that body is a lowering of soul, he held that for perfect blessedness soul and body at the last day must be re-united.

Lorenzo's other teacher, Landino, was rather a scholar than a philosopher. Apart from his political offices he held since 1457 the chair of Rhetoric and Poetry. His chief work had been commentaries on

Virgil and Horace, and a collection of elegies called *Xantia.* Yet he was early fascinated by the new philosophy, and had written to prove the harmony of Plato and Aristotle with each other and with Christianity. His aim, however, was still that of the scholar, elegance and intelligibility rather than depth. It is strange that the new school, with all its love of beauty and close study of Plato, should have neglected his æsthetic side, and abandoned the incomparable form which he imposed upon his thoughts for the formless bewilderments of Neo-Platonism. It is stranger still that Landino, the stylist, when wishing to popularise Platonic theories in the form of dialogue, should have reverted, not to Plato, but to Cicero. The *Disputationes Camaldulenses* are dialogues supposed to have been held by members of the Platonic Academy in the beech woods of Camaldoli on four summer days of 1468. The chief characters were Landino, Ficino, and the two young Medici, whom Leo Battista Alberti came over the hills to join. The work has an especial bearing on the present subject from the part which Lorenzo is made to play. The first discussion is on the respective merits of the active and the speculative life. Lorenzo supported the former, which, be it remembered, is the lowest form of virtue in the Neo-Platonic scale; Alberti, himself eminently practical, combated this view, and curiously enough the battle was drawn by the decision that both were necessary to man, a very moderate conclusion for a Neo-Platonic gathering. On the following day Lorenzo besought Alberti to expound the hidden

meaning of the *Æneid*. This led to a development of a Virgilian parable, thoroughly characteristic of the school, which saw in all mythology and ancient poetry the vehicle of ethical and religious truth. The passage of Æneas from Troy to Italy was the rise from the sensual to the spiritual life, while Dido at Carthage represented civic life, and by her death Lorenzo was warned that the state must fall when deserted by philosophy. In the course of the dialogue Latin and Italian poetry are brought into close connection; Lorenzo is represented as expressing his surprise that the allegory of Virgil is that of Dante, and, indeed, Dante had really found in the *Æneid* the same moral lesson. Thus at all events the fanciful Neo-Platonic allegory served to bring into harmony the classical and vernacular masterpieces, and was, perhaps, in literature of real service to the Italian revival. It was after this date that Landino embodied in his celebrated Commentary the results of his studies on the Italian poet. These dialogues of Camaldoli are, it may be believed, a fair representation of the discussions of the Platonist circle. As a rule, however, Plato himself had a more prominent place, especially at the simple banquets which commemorated the master, whose laurel-crowned bust was on the board. Here a dialogue would be selected, the parts distributed, and each of the disputants would unfold the hidden meaning to be found in the arguments of his original.

To contemporaries the most interesting personality of the Platonic group was Pico della Mirandola. His physical beauty, his graceful bearing and golden

hair, his marvellous memory and glowing eloquence, his very rank and wealth all contributed to his reputation. His challenge to the Court of Rome to argue the nine hundred theses, which he would support, proved that he had the courage of his opinions, and it did not shake his influence at Florence that thirteen of these were declared by the Roman theologians to be heretical. Pico, like many a young noble, had studied law, which would qualify him for a high post as Podestà. Law, however, gave place to philosophy, and he wandered from university to university, from Aristotelianism to Platonism, until he found a resting-place in the Florentine Academy. Henceforth, as wrote Politian, he was the Phœnix who nested in the Laurel. The Lombard noble spent most of the remainder of his short life in the society of Lorenzo, or in the companionship of Ficino and Politian on the slope which rises to Fiesole, no unfitting avenue to the contemplation of the perfect beauty.

Pico carried to their farthest limits the doctrines of his school. He could find a common unity in all knowledge and all religion; even in magic he saw the working of the forces which God had conferred on nature, set in motion by spirits of evil. The East, "my own East," as he would term it, exercised an irresistible fascination on his imagination. He studied Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldee, he pored over the Cabbala, finding therein all Judaism and all Christianity, believing it to contain the mysteries of the Christian faith imparted by God to Moses. All philosophy, all fable was but the medium through

which the hidden wisdom of the Godhead was revealed. Plato and Aristotle, Moses and Timæus, Zoroaster and Pythagoras, Bacchus and the Prophets, the Muses and the Sibyls were fellow witnesses of the faith. He wrote a work to prove that all learning lay in the history of the seven days' Creation. His early death cut the thread of many literary schemes, a mystic commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, a political history of divine doctrine, a harmony of Aristotle and Plato, a polemic against the seven classes of the enemies of the Church. Pico had read far more than he could digest, yet out of his farrago of fancy and learning he evolved a high ethical view of the dignity of man, the title, indeed, which he gave to the introduction to his theses. God, he wrote, had given man nothing of his own, but the power of attaining all. The individual was set upon the earth, in himself neither of earth nor heaven, neither mortal nor immortal, that he might be his own fashioner through his own free will, to lower himself to the beast or rise to the divine.

This doctrine taught by such a man was of real value to an age, in which the discovery and emancipation of the individual had too often meant escape from the control of religion and morality, and the indulgence of the beast. The general influence which Pico had gained at Florence since his arrival in 1480, is one of many instances that the city was prepared for a moral revival, even though she would not listen to the first call of Savonarola in 1481. There is something very modern in the shock

which Pico's one known lapse from virtue gave to public feeling. It was in May, 1486, that he was on his way from Rome to Florence, and at Arezzo yielded to the charms of the bride of a poor member of the house of Medici, an officer of customs. The lady was the widow of a trainer of horses for the *palio*, beautiful and rich. When Pico left the town the lady was missing, and was espied riding pillion on his horse. All the bells of Arezzo clanged, the police pursued, there was a running fight, the lady was dropped, and several of Pico's servants killed. Pico himself was arrested at a neighbouring town, but at once released by the influence of Lorenzo. The different versions might furnish a theme for a lighter poem on the model of *The Ring and the Book*. The lady readily persuaded her husband that she was walking outside the gate when she was violently lifted to Pico's horse. The Platonist's friends avowed that, overmastered by unrequited passion for his beauty, she leaped upon his horse, and his natural courtesy forbade him to thrust her off. Reasonable men preferred the supposition that Pico's ride and the lady's walk outside the gate were not without some concert. But the serious interest lies in the light upon Florentine opinion shed by the Ferrarese ambassador's conclusion to the story. "This unfortunate event is a subject for real regret, for, apart from his learning, he was regarded as a saint. Now, in this town, he has lost his character and his position, although similar mistakes have occurred to many men whom Venus has inflamed." The story proves that Florence of the

Renaissance had no low standard, while it is a painful commentary on that corruption of the senses, the "amor vulgaris" of the Platonists.

Pico amply redeemed his youthful error. The day soon came when, as at Alexandria of old, philosophy and Christianity must conflict. In Florence also religion won the day. Ficino, for a time, gave his full sympathy to Savonarola. Pico and the poet Benivieni, on whose poem of "Love Divine" Pico had commented, became the Friar's professed adherents. Benivieni broke with his philosophic past, bewailed his Christian Platonism as paganism, and though he published his earlier poems, he warned his readers to prefer the authority of Christ and Aquinas to that of Plato, if they differed. Pico, if his nephew may be believed, went farther. He burnt his love songs, spent his fortune on the poor, and purified himself by scourging. He had always had in view the conversion of the Jews, but it was in pride of argument; he could beat them with their own weapons from the armoury of the Cabbala. Now however he would become a friar, and wander in all humility barefoot through the world. This was not to be. Another lady, the zealous Savonarolist Cammilla Rucellai, had loved Pico. She had prophesied that he would die at the blooming of the lilies, and truly the phœnix soared to heaven as the French lilies floated into Florence.

The revival of Christianity killed the revived Platonism, but as in former times it assumed its armour. Savonarola, Thomist and Aristotelian by his Dominican education and profession, owed

much of his influence to the spiritual teaching of the Platonists. Mystic, as he was by nature, this could not be otherwise. He cast away in his strength the metaphysical absurdities, the logical elaborations, the grosser superstitions of the Platonists. Nevertheless in his ethical dissertations he held the Neo-Platonic views of the dignity of man, and of his potentiality for union with the Divine; his doctrine of beatitude, of the intercommunion between God and man, might well have been drawn from Pico or Ficino; the mystical exaltation, the ecstatic absorption in the Deity, which marks the treatise on *The Love of Jesus Christ*, is the purest product of the revived philosophy. Finally the divine voice which spoke to the Friar through angels was the dæmon of Socrates, which with the Neo-Platonists of Florence had expanded into a hierarchy of mediation between God and man.

At the opposite pole to Pico and Ficino stood Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco. These two humourists were Lorenzo's constant companions. Both men of keen wit, possessed with the gift of rapid improvisation, they would ply each other with epigrams and engage for their patron's amusement in sham fights which at times approached a serious wrangle. To Lorenzo's nature, half gay, half melancholy, such diversion or distraction seemed a necessity of life. Nor was either a mere buffoon. Matteo Franco was appointed as chaplain and confidential adviser to Maddalena de' Medici when she married Francheschetto Cybò, and proved the truest and tenderest of counsellors. Pulci was a man of practical ability,

whom Lorenzo frequently employed in diplomatic missions. At Milan and Venice, Bologna and Naples, he had watched over his master's personal interests. His death in 1484 left a blank which could not easily be filled. He was older than Lorenzo, having been born in 1432, but he belongs essentially to the Laurentian period, for the friendship dated from the day when Lorenzo saved the little patrimony in the Mugello from the creditors of Pulci's random brother Luca who died in gaol. It is to this Luca that is attributed a poem on Lorenzo's tournament. The Pulci, indeed, were a family of poets.

It is perhaps an accident that Pulci's name is written on the roll of the immortals, while his rival's reputation was as short as it was merry. The *Morgante* was a growth rather than a composition. It arose from the verses recited or sung at the Medicean table. To Lucrezia, Lorenzo's mother, is ascribed the credit of encouraging the poet to give to his verses organic form. For some years it was the amusement of the Medicean circle in its lighter moments, Lorenzo, Politian, and others each suggesting episodes or inventing situations. Thus a popular form of poetry was absorbed and assimilated, opening a fresh range of subject to higher Italian verse. Even if it be admitted that Boiardo's *Orlando* was composed independently and contemporaneously, yet, Pulci can claim to have played the pioneer for Tasso and Ariosto.

The French romances, especially those derived from the Carolingian legend, had long taken hold on popular imagination in Italy. They were the com-

mon theme of the professional street poet, who was often appointed by the township, and who may be seen in contemporary art enlivening the municipal or private banquet. The people were fascinated by the mixture of rough drollery and high adventure in these endless tales. With each century the comic element became broader, the adventures more extraordinary; "Emperors and Paladins, magicians and dragons, giants and Saracens multiplied as rabbits." Considerations of chronology, geography, and science were utterly discarded. The tales clustered round the noble family of Chiaramonte, which represented the principle of good, and the faithless house of Maganza, in which hereditarily lurked the principle of evil. Orlando and Rinaldo were the inevitable heroes, and the many thousand stanzas ended with a circumstantial, if highly imaginative, representation of the fight of Roncesvalles. It was this unpromising slough of literature which Pulci converted into a fount of classic verse. In the vapid, dreary tales he realised the possibilities for description, even for pathos. But above all he appreciated the humorous side of the gross exaggerations. The poem was characteristically named not after the real hero but from the giant brought with him from the East, in whose fabulous strength exaggeration found its climax, Morgante who after supplying the place of a ship's mast was ignominiously slain by the nip of a crab.

Pulci's tale followed the ordinary course but for the addition of two new characters which gave to it much of its interest. Margutte is the lesser giant

who is made to accompany Morgante; he is the incarnation of materialism and frolicsome mischief. Astarotte is the devil of dogma, the sceptic who employs theological arguments to serve his infernal purpose. Thus was it possible to graft modern modes of thought, material and Italian, on the old French myth. Apart from this the improvement of Pulci's version depended on the freedom and life of the versification, the beauty of the descriptive and pathetic passages, the heightened interest of character, and in the irony which accentuated the contrast between the would-be chivalrous elements and those which were intentionally comic. Pulci delicately enforced the existing exaggeration, and thus led repeatedly to unsuspected bathos, which he was unable to resist even in the noble passage which describes Orlando's death. Nevertheless it would be wrong to call the poem a burlesque or a caricature; it is the application of dry Tuscan wit by a writer of fancy and cultivation to the favourite stories of the lower classes, converting them into a pastime for the higher. But the conversion was not quite complete, the *Morgante* was not exclusively a poem of the Court; it was still appropriate to Florentine democratic taste.

It is clear that Cervantes' greater invention bears a close relation to that of Pulci. Against the latter it would be still less fair to lay the charge that he laughed his country's chivalry away. If Spain had passed her age of chivalry Italy had never reached it; she was the one civilised nation that chivalry had left unmoved. This was no doubt, in part, because

Italian memory looked back beyond the barbarous Carolingian legend, but chiefly the reason lay in the material and practical Italian nature. What interest had chivalry for manufacturers and merchants, for professional Condottieri and business-like Popes? Least of all was there chivalric sentiment in the Medicean Court, with its mockery and love of comfort, its materialism and modernism. The passion for tournaments, for so-called knightly exercises, need not deceive; they were but the opportunities of ostentation. And still less genuine are the bastard chivalric forms of the later age for whom Ariosto and Tasso wrote, when the naturalness of Italian character had been tainted by the high-flown affectation of the Spaniard.

Pulci, less cultivated than the rest of the Medicean circle, was also less religious. He had little sense of the new spiritual movement, whether Christian or Neo-Platonic. In his own lifetime he was attacked by the Church, while Savonarola burnt his books upon his pyre of vanities. Yet he was no heretic nor atheist, but an indifferentist wavering between old-fashioned scepticism and customary formalism. In his sonnets he laughed at immortality and faith, yet in his *Confession* he recanted and promised to follow the precepts of Fra Mariano and call in the poems which were not in harmony with the Gospel. In vain, however, did Nannina de Medici strive to convert this well-loved but ill approved member of the household. Her exhortations to thought more devout and life more strict were only efficacious for the moment. She could

not hold the Proteus to his prayer. Pulci could always laugh his conscience down.

Nearest of all the Laurentian circle to its master, in tastes and talents, was Politian. It was Lorenzo's great good fortune that, at the moment when he entered upon his independent career, he was struck by the merits of Angelo Ambrogini, who was born in 1454 and was thus some years his junior. Angelo's father was a lawyer at Montepulciano, whence the boy later derived his more familiar name. This little town lay in the wild hills of Southern Tuscany, a bone of contention between Florence and Siena. Here the blood feud was still common, and neither the municipality nor the government could command obedience. Benedetto had, five years before his death, appealed to Piero that for the love of his four little sons he might be suffered to remain at peace within his house without bearing arms, which were not his trade. The appeal was vain; the lawyer fell beneath his enemies' daggers, leaving his widow and children with very scanty means. It proves how deeply Humanism had taken root that its most finished disciple should emerge from a scene of bloodshed in a distant mountain town. Angelo came to Florence, and here he studied under Ficino, Landino, and Argyropulos, wrote Latin epigrams at fifteen and Greek at seventeen. He was haunted by the fear that from excess of poverty he must abandon his studies for the shop. In his trouble he wrote to Lorenzo begging for a robe, however worn, and a pair of shoes, for his toes had escaped from their prison to the light of day. Lorenzo sent at least a

garment, and Angelo's clever verses of gratitude are said to have won him an entrance to the Medicean household.

The jaded Humanism of the lower Arno seemed at once revived by the wholesome breeze which now blew upon it from the mountain tops. Odes, elegies, and epigrams in Greek and Latin, many of them extempore, followed in quick succession. Politian was no pedant. The Classics were absorbed into his system, and became part of himself. Latin and Greek sprang naturally to his lips, there was no inward process of translation, he thought with the thoughts of the ancients. His Latin, at all events, was as spontaneous as that of his models, while with unwearied industry he sought to give his writings the perfection of form, of smoothness and of roundness. Hence Politian's Latin writings live and deserve to live, while those of his contemporaries have long been consigned to a limbo from which there is no resuscitation. His poem on the Violet, and an elegy on the death of the beautiful Albiera degli Albizzi, who died soon after marriage, are still treasured as gems of Latin poetry. It was on a translation of the *Iliad* into Latin that Politian first relied for fame. Ficino told Lorenzo that it was impossible for the ignorant to tell whether Politian's Latin or Homer's Greek were the original. Cardinal Ammanati was fortunately more critical and more honest; he praised the work as a useful exercise, as an earnest of future fame, but thought that Homer might after all prefer to remain a Greek. Of the *Iliad* only four books

ANGELO POLIZIANO.

Portrait by Lorenzo di Credi in the collection of Lord Windsor.

(*From a photograph by Dixon.*)

were finished, and of more practical utility has been a less belauded translation of Herodian.

Politian was much more than a stylist and translator. He was a pioneer in modern methods of scholarship, in criticism, in interpretation, in emendation. He ascribed the highest importance to exhaustive collation of MSS., and took all pains to found his text upon the best. Thus his edition of the *Pandects* was for very long unrivalled. He applied moreover to scholarship a systematic study of numismatics and epigraphy, and not content with the Medicean collections travelled to Rome, Venice, and Verona in search of fresh material. At the age of twenty-six Politian obtained the chair of Latin and Greek eloquence. Rarely has a professor been so prolific and so stimulating. Replete with learning, his lectures were no dry comment on the text; his aim was to give his pupils a passion for their subject. In each of his introductions to a classical author he illustrated the whole branch of literature of which this author was the type. Fanciful the lectures often were, the *Lamia* for instance, a preface to Aristotle's *Analytics*, which opened with a humorous description of the mischievous power of witches. Yet these very fancies drew the listener's attention, and thus the *Lamia* led to a discourse on the uses of philosophy. Suetonius was taken as a text for a lecture on historical method, Persius for another on the origin and elements of satire. The introduction to Homer treated the old Greek bard as the father of all knowledge, while the *Panepistemon* was an

attempt to classify the arts and sciences which had been subsequently differentiated. More celebrated were the four introductions in Latin verse given between 1481 and 1486, and published under the name of *Sylvæ*. As the *Sylvæ* of Statius they were treated as impromptu expressions of poetical exaltation, but they are in reality finished works of art. The *Manto* was the introduction to Virgil's *Bucolics*, the *Rusticus* to his *Georgics*, the *Ambra* to Politian's first love, Horace. The *Nutricia* teaches that poetry is the mother of civilisation, and contains an analytical list of classical poets, which it was intended to develop into a text-book of literary history. The lecturers would often wander far from their subject, and thus a substantial portion of the *Ambra* sang the beauties of Lorenzo's newly built villa. Professors, then, as now, were at the mercy of their pupils' note-books, and in 1489 Lorenzo persuaded his friend to publish his commentaries on the Classics. Of these a hundred were produced, while another series was ready on Politian's death. But enough has been said to prove that Angelo was a great scholar and a great teacher.

It was impossible that so intimate a friend of Lorenzo should long be unaffected by the vernacular reaction. Yet it was almost by accident that Politian can claim to be the father of the Italian operatic drama. A juvenile father he was, indeed, for he was under twenty when, during a visit to Mantua, he composed his dramatic sketch *Orfeo*. It was, on his own authority, composed within two days, amid the interruptions and the bustle of Court festivities, and

written in the vulgar tongue that it might be the more generally understood. The dramatic form was, indeed, merely a sitting for the short lyric jewels which still shine out from it. Yet it set a fashion which slowly, very slowly, gained the mastery of the classical drama. To the present day the lyrical melodies of the *Orfeo della dolce lyra* hold their own among the voices of the street against those of its modern rival *Orphée aux Enfers*. The next great monument of Politian's skill was a courtly epic on Giuliano's tournament. To sing the prowess of this sham fight he finally abandoned the Homeric battles. The author met the hopeless difficulties of his theme by never reaching them. The first book contained idyllic pictures of the loves of Giuliano and his mistress, the second the panegyric of the house of Medici, and there the poem closed. It may or may not be false art to make the pen do the pencil's work. Politian had naturally not read Lessing. His *Stanzas*, as they are technically called, are exquisitely finished pictures, dealing purely with external form, without any portrayal of thought or affection. His subject is physical beauty, the loveliness of landscape, the loveliness of woman. The effect of his word painting is indeed, as with Virgil, heightened by descriptive melody, his marvellous manipulation of verse can express rest or motion at his will. It was a revelation of the descriptive powers of *ottava rima*. The result was gained by the combination of two qualities, usually antagonistic, swing and compression. Hitherto the stanzas had had more rhyme than reason; they ran one into another without rule

or method; they resembled a cross-chopping Channel sea, whereas Politian's, each complete in itself yet each blending with its fellows, have been well compared to the regular cadence of long Atlantic waves.

As Politian became more intimate with Lorenzo his verse became yet more popular in tone. From his pen or even from his tongue issued the ballads and short lyrics, which, themselves caught up from the street, have in their turn been sung by generation after generation in the public squares of Florence. Politian was, however, rather a decorative than a creative poet, and he lived in an age the aim of whose art was mainly ornament. He was over-modest perhaps in denying to himself the gift of originality; he possessed, indeed, originality of system though not of thought. His thoughts he borrowed from every poet, modern or ancient, from Claudian as from Virgil, from the street singer as from Dante. He was a professed eclectic, arguing against those scholars who set three or four of the classics on a pedestal, and cried, "These are your gods and these only shall you worship." Yet all that Politian borrowed he made his own by his gift of enthusiastic appreciation. All previous poetry seemed fused to be fashioned into new and lifelike forms. Politian had none of the plagiarist's false shame; he avowed his principles, quoting in his defence the lines of Lucretius:

> "As bees sip every bloom the flowering glades among,
> E'en so the poet's food is every golden song."

Thus it was that the scholar, steeped to the lips in classic lore, became a popular poet whom some could read and all could sing.

The poet's character was less perfect than his verse. He was not one of poetry's great prophets, but a literary man with many of the vices not uncommon in his class, avarice, ill-nature, religious indifference. He wrote for fame and money; for money perhaps more than fame. Adversity is a sorry schoolmistress, whose lessons it is difficult to forget. Politian never shook himself free of the spectre of his early poverty. He would waste his time in vapid panegyric, and grumble at its payment. Sheltered and salaried by Lorenzo, installed in the house as tutor to his sons, he ceaselessly begged for more. His verses were paid by benefices; he became prior of S. Paolo, canon of the Cathedral. It is said that Piero de' Medici, before his fall, begged for a Cardinal's hat for his late tutor. Though not a literary duellist as Poggio or Filelfo, Politian had his quarrels, not all of his seeking. These fall, however, chiefly within the last year of his life. He had earnestly protested against the corruption of criticism by flattery, and against the over-loading of classical editions with a false show of learning. These were caps which fitted many heads. He had, moreover, in his *Miscellanea*, stated that critical instinct was the gift of only some four living men, of whom Lorenzo and Pico were two. All who were not included in the schedule of critics took natural offence. These were the causes of his breach with Merula, the leading Humanist at the Court of Milan, who led an onslaught on the Florentine triumvirate of letters, Politian, Pico, and Ficino. These disputes tended to assume national proportions, to divide rival schools of learning into

hostile camps. There was long a running fire of repartee between Politian and Bartolommeo Scala, the Chancellor, whose despatches Lorenzo would maliciously entrust to Politian for revision. The fight waxed warmer, and Bartolommeo also attacked the selfish Triumvirs, who would suffer no other scholar to climb the ladder. The breach was widened by a lady. Bartolommeo's beautiful and learned daughter gratefully accepted Politian's Iambics but scornfully declined his amorous advances. Her marriage with Marullus, a hybrid Greek, brought the quarrel to a climax. Marullus, who taught at Naples in the school of Pontano, brought to his aid a powerful Neapolitan ally in Sannazzaro. Thus in the sphere of letters the Triple Alliance was hopelessly dissolved. Yet it must be admitted that with the advance of real learning manners had amended, and Politian as a rule abstained from the coarsest forms of abuse which disgraced the feuds of Poggio and Filelfo.

Politian lived too much in the past to be affected by the rumblings of the religious revolution in the immediate future. He was, after his death, accused of atheism and loose morals. An atheist could hardly have been the close friend of Pico and Ficino. Politian never openly combated the faith; he kept the observances of the Church, preached sermons, and wrote hymns. He did indeed attack the obscurantist monks, who frightened the ignorant with threats of coming doom, who were always blaming and domineering, destroying the cheerfulness of life. Very characteristic is his own account of his attend-

ing the sermon of Fra Mariano da Genazzano. He went from curiosity, expecting to be disgusted by the popular preacher after whom all Florence ran. The Friar, however, carried the Humanist away, but by what means? By the music of his voice, the elegance of his diction, the artistic grace of his gestures! The best of stylists is seldom the best of Christians; Politian's religion was probably Christianity tempered by taste and comfort. The admirer of Fra Mariano could not appreciate, like Pico and Ficino, the religious revival of Savonarola. It is thought that the Savonarolists took their revenge for his indifference. The Chronicler Parenti writes that Politian died in such infamy and public shame as never man was burdened with. But all those who hated Piero or worshipped Savonarola could fling mud at the most prominent figure of the Laurentian age now that his friend was dead and his pupil rushing to his fall.

It remains to speak of the Mæcenas of this silver age. The laurel sheltered the singing birds which carolled to the Tuscan spring, but the laurel's leaves themselves were vocal. Lorenzo was no mere patron. Of all the choir he was the most original, the most versatile, the most modern, the poet whose thought, apart from language, can still strike a chord in the reader of to-day. It is fair to remember that he died at forty-three, that what was virtually his reign began at twenty, and that for the four previous years he had trod the stage of politics. He maintained a correspondence unequalled probably by any prince, within Italy or without, including every class

from Louis XI. and the Soldan to the humblest petitioner for civil office or ecclesiastical benefice, dealing with every branch of literary or artistic interest, comprising all the needs of Europe's most select museum. Yet Lorenzo's published poems would form a creditable tale of production for a life of leisure. Pico was a prince and no mere courtier, a man of boundless learning and serious thought. If, then, Pico rated Lorenzo's poems above those of Dante and Petrarch it must be taken as the genuine, if absurd, expression of one of the foremost characters and critics of the age, and not as courtly flattery. Landino, who was no sycophant, believed his pupil to be superior to all other writers in the free handling of the octave to express variety of thought. "Imitation is the sincerest flattery," and Politian was directly influenced, not only by Lorenzo's patronage, but by his example; the wider scope which his later works assumed was due to his master's inspiration.

It would be impossible here to indulge in a literary criticism of Lorenzo 's poems, but their more prominent characteristics will be found to throw light upon the inner life of him whose character has been regarded as so mysterious. They form, moreover, an important link in the history of vernacular Italian poetry, attaching themselves closely to the past, and in more than one respect fixing a fresh point of departure for the future. Of his own position in this respect he was early conscious. With his celebrated letter to Federigo of Naples in 1466, he had forwarded a selection of the choicest models of Tuscan poetry, and at the close he added four sonnets of his

own, if only, he wrote with graceful humility, to serve as a foil to the beauties of his elders. Boy as he was, he felt himself to be the successor of Dante and Cavalcanti, of Cino and Petrarch. This consciousness was fully justified. Lorenzo is the most typical poet of the fifteenth century. Politian was absorbed in the classical past, Pulci retained much of the half barbaric roughness of the middle age. Lorenzo combined the polish of a long age of Latin study, the thought which was the heritage of the new Greek learning, the decorative sense which characterised the art of his period, the realism, the search for nature which redeemed this art from artificiality. The Renaissance, in its narrower sense, was not only an age of birth but of decay; it seemed already old, it was troubled by impossible desires, clouded with the presage of coming sorrow, and in Lorenzo's poems alone, perhaps, does the prophet's melancholy find expression. The very variety of subject, metre, mood, and method would make these poems an important stage in the development of Tuscan letters.

Lorenzo's relation to his two literary fathers, Dante and Petrarch, is often close. The absorption of the earlier writers was a necessity if there was to be a revival of Italian as opposed to Latin poetry. Machiavelli's phrase holds good of letters as of politics and religion, that from time to time a return to original principles becomes inevitable. Lorenzo's comment on his own sonnets is an adaptation of the *Vita Nuova;* his essay on the capacity and literary history of the Italian tongue draws its inspiration

from the *De Vulgari Eloquio*. Of the caricatures of the *Commedia* in the *Beoni* more will be said hereafter. It is well worth while, moreover, in this relation to watch Lorenzo's metaphors and images. To Petrarch in outward form he stands yet nearer. Love is necessarily the young writer's theme, and Petrarch had so exhaustively swept the scales of love that a new note could scarce be struck. For all this Lorenzo's originality is often, if not always, manifest. His sonnets and *canzoni* are not plagiarisms; in diction they seem to belong to an earlier, in sentiment to a later age. Petrarch was doubtless the greater poet, yet the modern lover finds a truer reflex of his feelings in Lorenzo.

The poet would probably have rated his sonnets as his highest work, though he frankly admits that his courage is superior to his skill. Like many writers he had a theory on the sonnet. Difficulty, he thought was of the essence of merit, and sonnets were the most difficult form of verse, for rhythm is complicated to a peculiar extent by rhyme; every one who had tried to write a sonnet knew how many pretty sentiments were thrown out of gear by this element of rhyme, losing at once their perspicuity and their flow; there was all the difference between those sonneteers who made their rhymes do violence to their subject and those whose subject made their rhymes its servants. As to the appropriate subject for the sonnet, Lorenzo's very words are perhaps worth quoting. "The sonnet is so short that it cannot suffer a single word without a meaning, and therefore its true subject-matter must

be a sentiment delicate and pointed, limited to a few lines and aptly told, with avoidance of harshness and obscurity. The sonnet has in these features much resemblance to the epigram in so far as point in subject-matter and skill in handling are concerned, but the sonnet is at once worthy and capable of weightier thought, and thus becomes so much the more difficult." Lorenzo's sonnets, save on the score of harshness, bear out his principles. Yet there is weariness in two hundred sonnets on another's love, even if lightened by the more generous flow of an occasional *canzone*.

The *Silve d'Amore* is perhaps Lorenzo's most taking work. Here the swinging octave gave free play to his imagination. The idea, as with Politian, is taken from the *Silvæ* of Statius, with perhaps, in Lorenzo's case, some reference to the wood of the *Divina Commedia*. The poet's thought wanders hither and thither as in a forest, without definite direction, or search for exit. The main motive is derived from the death of Giuliano's love, Simonetta Cattanei, and the poet's craving for an outward object in which his spiritual affection may be absorbed. From this ostensible bridle-path the poet wanders from side to side into the thickets of his fancy and the mazes of his learning, yet returning always to the track of love. To no modern poem perhaps can the *Silve* be so well compared as to *In Memoriam*. Within the liberal limits of such a scheme, the original and artificial qualities of the two poets find ample scope for their display.

From the *Silve* to the idylls the transition is

easy, for indeed in the former the idyllic plays no little part. The *Ambra* is a mythological fancy of the foundation of Lorenzo's villa at Poggio a Caiano, and the tale is of the well-worn Ovidian type. The nymph bathing in the Ombrone fires the passion of the river god; she flies from his embraces, and when just within his grasp is changed into a rock, on which, by the aid of imagination, the villa may be conceived to stand. The story is but a peg whereon to hang the poet's decorative beauties; it illustrates his love for natural scenery, a love so rare that it is difficult to find a writer of that or the succeeding age who appreciates nature for its own sake, apart from its relation to mankind. This quality appears again in the *Caccia con Falcone* which describes a day's hawking in the hills. Very beautiful are the few opening lines which describe the wild creatures hurrying back to the woods at dawn, and very delicate is the touching in of the little valley, the scene of the day's sport. Yet here the descriptive passages are in strict subordination to the action of the piece. This is in itself almost a drama, and description runs freely into dialogue. Lorenzo's friends and huntsmen are introduced, while every dog is called by name, and the leading hounds almost assume a character. Nevertheless the idyllic form is never lost, and brisk and humorous as the story is, it never quite descends into burlesque. The poem might well be illustrated by Romanino's picture of the hunt near Colleone's castle of Malpaga. In all Italian literature there is nothing which more vividly brings home a day in the Tuscan hills; Lorenzo's

realism enabled him to express his revel in the pleasures of the country. With the idylls may be classed the *Eclogues* of Corinto, the shepherd, identified with Lorenzo's self, and the *Loves of Mars and Venus*, consisting of four monologues, the goddess calling on her lover, the lover's answer to her invitation, and the reproaches of Apollo, who insists that every sin must bring its penalty, and calls the denizens of heaven to witness their sister's shame; the speech of Vulcan is apparently unfinished. Purely classical as the subjects of these poems are, the treatment varies freely from the models, and they contain some of the sweetest passages of Lorenzo's muse. Somewhat similar in form, but very different in matter, is a long youthful poem called the *Altercazione*, remarkable chiefly as proving how thoroughly the young poet had assimilated the new Platonism. The poem opens with a dialogue between Lorenzo and a Shepherd who sing the respective praises of town and country life. Then appears Ficino with his lyre to whom the disputants refer their case, and who teaches that true happiness is only found in the spiritual life which raises man from earth to heaven.

Hitherto, if, perhaps, we except the *Caccia*, we have seen the poet of the Classics, of the cultured Renaissance, natural, indeed, yet influenced by the education which alone the Humanists thought worth bestowing. But Lorenzo was not content with this; he must sound all the depths of Tuscan life; the masses too have their poetic needs and can furnish their material for verse. The popular form

which poetry took in the country districts was the *Rispetto*, believed to be of Neapolitan or Sicilian origin, but rapidly naturalised throughout Italy. Its form was usually the octave, and the poem might well consist of one, or, if the singer was prolix or prolific, of a hundred stanzas. The *Rispetto*, adapted itself to improvisation and rapid description; it was the natural vehicle to convey admiration among the lower classes, as the sonnet was the artificial medium of expression among the higher. Even Politian had condescended to write Rispetti, and Lorenzo wove fifty octaves together into his *Nencia da Barberino*, in which the peasant Vallèra sings the beauties and capacities of his rustic love, and the sacrifices and gifts which he will make for her possession. It is, indeed, an eclogue in a popular vernacular form, replacing the idyllic shepherd and shepherdess by the actual Tuscan peasant. There is not sufficient genuine rustic poetry of the fifteenth century extant to justify a positive conclusion, yet it seems not impossible that, as Pulci had turned to ridicule the marvellous imaginations of the singer of the street, so here Lorenzo exaggerated and made fun of the clout's material metaphors. Throughout the stanzas there is the suspicion of suppressed laughter, a tossing to and fro between pathos and bathos. Feeling lines which realistically represent an untrained passion, picturesque touches of the pastoral life of the peasant and his herd, find an anti-climax in others which compare the beauty's charms to the lover's favourite, if not refined, *menu*. This alternation between grave and gay, between mockery and

pity, between realism and idealism, is characteristic of Lorenzo's temper, and apart from this, the poem pleases from its vigorous life and "go," a fine example of which may be found in the stanza on Nencia's dancing. It is, moreover, a lesson in the dress, the occupations, the pleasures of the countryside. The *Nencia* was virtually a new creation; it at once found imitators, and, for a century to come, was the favourite vehicle for Tuscan humour. The type deteriorated, however, when it passed from Lorenzo's hands; the peasant, who with him was an object of interest, pleasantry, and pity, becomes a butt for ridicule, a pretext for indecency.

Far less pleasant reading than *Nencia* is the *Simposio* or *Beoni*, which is a parody of the *Divina Commedia*. Lorenzo is taken by a friend who acts as Virgil did to Dante, to see a cask broached in Ponte a Rifredi, close to Florence. As the drinking proceeds the guide is changed for another, even as Virgil gave place to Beatrice. Each of the visitors is satirised in a burlesque of Dante's style, in answer to the visitor's enquiries. Leading citizens of Florence, Lorenzo's personal friends, a Strozzi, an Adimari, a Pandolfini, are introduced, but the fun is fastest at the expense of the two clerical drunkards, the parish priest of Antello and the pastor of Fiesole. It is said that Lorenzo wrote this long satire at a sitting, and indeed the metre and the subject allowed of rapid composition. It did not perhaps materially differ from other improvisations which formed the amusement of his leisure, and it is perhaps an accident that it found its way to paper, for

it was never finished. Roscoe and other writers ascribe to it, probably, too much importance, when they regard it as the origin of Italian moral satire.

As the *rispetto* was the favourite form of rural poetry, so the lighter form of urban song was the *ballata*, to which the skill of the Venetian Giustiniani had given increased popularity. The *ballata* was not merely a literary product, it was written to be set to music, and to this music the dancers tripped, even as in latter days they have danced in the dawn to song and string in the Night-Bell galop. This form of verse was well adapted to Lorenzo's gifts, and to his passionate love of music. He revelled in the swing and the variety of metre. Here his epicureanism could have full play, an epicureanism all the more genuine for its undertone of melancholy. The usual theme is the invitation to love and pleasure, for life is short and love is shorter, the weariness of waiting for the fulfilment of desire, the repentance for chances lost from cowardice or from carelessness. These little songs seem the epitome of the bright social life of Florence, dancing out from the villa or the palace to the extemporised ball-room in the street or the public square.

For the crowded masses on the great *piazza* at the season of the chief festivals, there were other songs in store. Nothing has done more injury to Lorenzo's reputation than the Carnival songs which he composed. It was early assumed, both by Savonarola and Machiavelli, that the amusements which he organised were deliberately intended to corrupt the people, to enfeeble its morality, and sap its political

independence. It is true enough that two or three of Lorenzo's carnival songs are so gross that their publication in collections intended for the general reader is difficult to defend. Yet it is reasonable to remember that indecency inconceivable found an honoured place in the religious festivities of Greece and Rome, and in the Feast of Fools in the Middle Ages. Lorenzo was no inventor of the Florentine Carnival, and it is hardly probable that he added to the coarseness of its pleasures. Bands of men would parade the streets, travestied as girls and women, and singing songs, the character of which may be imagined. To Lorenzo's artistic sense these performances were monotonous, tasteless, and unmeaning, and he and his artist friends set themselves to reorganise the Carnival, to convert it into a splendid pageant. Cars passed in procession through the town, their occupants representing classical themes, such as Bacchus and Ariadne, or the powers of nature, or humorous groups, the shrill cicadas and chattering girls, young wives escaped from their old husbands, old husbands pursuing the runaways. Others represented the trades of Florence, the shoemakers, the coppersmiths, the confectioners, the spinsters of gold thread, the unemployed. All, as they came before the crowd, would sing their songs, and extremely filthy some of these would be. It may be hoped that Heinrich Isaak's music drowned the words. Behind the cars would march on horse or foot hundreds of the smartest youths of Florence, clad in their finest clothes, playing their varied instruments, and making merry with the people. Nor were these

spectacles confined to the Carnival. It was for the great Florentine festival of San Giovanni that Lorenzo planned his Triumph of Paulus Æmilius, while on May-day garlanded girls would dance round the May-pole to Lorenzo's or Politian's ballads.

That this splendid organisation of the Carnival won popular favour for Lorenzo it is impossible to doubt, but that this was his chief purpose is far less certain. It is to mistake his nature to believe that he was ceaselessly searching for the instruments of power. He was not secretive, but expansive; no man in Florence could more heartily luxuriate in the pleasure of the day than he; his laughter-loving artistic spirit found its vent in this new Carnival. The more splendid triumphs exercised his artistic tastes, the writing of indecent songs amused his grosser moments. Lorenzo pleased himself as fully as the people whom he wished to rule. Every government, after all, that is founded on the people must strive to cater for the popular amusement. This is a clause in the programme of the state socialism of to-day, while Machiavelli, in the one passage of his *Prince*, in which he seems to refer to Lorenzo's principles, asserts it to be the duty of the ruler to secure that the people can exercise their trades in peace, and be instructed and entertained by the encouragement of art and pleasure. Even Savonarola did not dare suppress the organised amusements of the Carnival, he could but change the character of the songs and the processions, and hymns were sung to the old ribald tunes. Gross as were a few of Lorenzo's verses, a dozen stanzas

cannot taint a nation, and, if the amusement of the masses be political corruption, the charge must be laid also against the Saint who preserved the system, while changing the wording, of the songs.

Side by side with Lorenzo's *ballate* and Carnival songs are printed his lauds or spiritual poems. Scientifically this is correct, but the moral contrast is the more startling. In some of these, the voice of Savonarola himself might almost seem to echo. Of Lorenzo's lauds, seven have been preserved. Those who believe only in his political and artistic sides, have regarded these as an intellectual *tour de force;* in every subject the artist found material on which to impose the form of art, and little cared what this material might be. But whatever were Lorenzo's failings he was essentially human, and eminently impressionable. Throughout life he had been subject to influences of a religious or quasi-religious character. The devotional feeling of his grandfather was conspicuous; his mother, a woman of deep piety, had written lauds for her children's use. His sister Nannina was sincerely pious, and would strive to convert Pulci from free living and indifference to a spiritual sense. Pico was regarded as a saint; Platonism, as presented by Ficino, was a mystical devotional creed. Florence was not an irreligious town; in the midst of much pleasure and some license it was careful in the observance of its rites, and, more than this, it was all ready to receive the moral and spiritual revival of Savonarola, in itself the climax of the religious unrest of the century. Being of such nature as he was, it is impossible that

Lorenzo should have stood amid such influences unmoved. Living with his life in his hand, conscious of the dangerous character of his hereditary disease, overwrought in mind and body, he longed to know the rest, the emancipation from the lower senses, which both Christianity and Platonism taught, to escape from the dilemma of human knowledge, which, at once too little and too great, he had described as the source of the misery of man, in his own words to drink of the spring which alone could quench his inextinguishable thirst.

> "For if, O Lord, I search Thee in the track
> Of riches, and of honour and delight,
> The more I search the more my quest I lack,
> That spot whereon the heart were fain to light."

Doubt and weariness may not be the surest foundations for a religious life, but in an impressionable nature they may well be springs of spiritual song. It is impossible to read the laud beginning:

> "O Dio, o Sommo bene, o come fai?
> Chè te sol amo e non ritrovo mai,"

and still to think that its author was not searching for his God, but executing a literary somersault.

One more poem remains to be considered. Its importance might easily be missed by a cursory perusal. In Lorenzo's age there was no drama in the modern sense. Such plays as were performed during Court festivities were those of the Classic playwrights. In the churches, religious dramas were

frequently performed, representing the life of our Saviour, or marvellous scenes from the deeds of the saints, the development of which bore some resemblance to that of the Carolingian romances. These plays were rather spectacular than dramatic, or at least the element of character was almost absent. Lorenzo, not content with sonnet, elegy, eclogue, and idyll, ballad and burlesque, must needs essay the drama.* The play *San Giovanni and San Paolo* the two eunuchs who suffered martyrdom under Julian the Apostate, is essentially a dramatic rather than a literary work. It was composed by Lorenzo for his children by whom it was performed, and the part of Constantine is said to have been played by the author. In its general lines it is but one of the many religious representations of the day. There is, however, this difference, that it was written not for the Church but for the home, and, therefore, should this form of drama be developed, there was no guarantee, indeed no likelihood, that its character would remain religious. The interest of the play itself, indeed, is historical, and, above all, it is no mere spectacle, it is an attempt at the analysis of character and motive. Even as ancient comedy was derived from the waggons with the wandering troupe which went the round of the rustic Dionysia, so Roscoe saw in Lorenzo's Carnival chariots the origin of the modern

* The *Loves of Mars and Venus* has been classed with the eclogues, though it may more strictly be catalogued as a drama for three characters. But it is not certain that it was written for performance.

comedy. This is perhaps an exaggeration, but it is certain that in *San Giovanni and San Paolo* written in later life, Lorenzo cast himself loose from the regulation religious play and from the classical drama. As his friend Politian may claim for himself the origin of the opera, so Lorenzo, had he lived, might have been at least an important link in the history of the modern drama.

Apart from this, the play has points of peculiar interest. The weariness of Constantine, his longing to abandon the so-called sweets of rule, which were but a store of toil for body and for mind, may be the summing up of many a moment and many an experience in the author's life. Here, too, are to be found Lorenzo's political testament, and his theory of a sovereign's duty. The three children of Constantine, who correspond to his own three sons, must remain in perfect unity of interest, yet one must rule, that the integrity of monarchy be preserved. It would have been well if Piero had remembered the precepts which his father did not himself invariably follow. He who would govern, spoke Constantine, must think of the good of all; he that would chastise another's errors, must himself strive to do no ill, for with the people example is of greatest weight, all eyes are turned upon the lord, and what he does do many; the ruler must never study his personal pleasure or advantage, his eyes must be always open that the rest may sleep, he must hold the scales of justice even, put avarice and licentiousness away, show courtesy and sweet temper towards all; he who would be

lord must be his subjects' slave. It is curious to compare Lorenzo's theory of the monarch's duties with the picture of the tyrant's crimes which Savonarola is believed to have drawn after Lorenzo's actions.

Of peculiar interest is the elaboration of Julian's manful character, his regret for the wretched shreds of Empire left to the Roman people, his revival of military valour, his idea that the sovereignty and property of the Empire is the people's, while to the ruler all else is cheap but honour; the king and the sage are above the stars, and Julian above the astrologer's futile laws, for the propitious hours are those which the child of fortune chooses for himself. Other touches there are also which might be ascribed to Machiavelli, such as "It is reputation which upholds government," and "In the first four days a ruler must establish his authority." It is no wonder that the hero of the pagan revival should have an attraction for the last great figure of the fifteenth-century Renaissance; Lorenzo's sympathies seem to be with Julian and it is almost in a wail that the drama closes with the line—

"Oh, Christ the Galilean, thou after all hast conquered."

The characteristics of Lorenzo's writings have been seen to be his versatility, not only in handling different forms of metre but in pursuing different lines of thought, and the national feeling which prompted him to follow in the traces of vernacular poetry, wherever it could be found, whether in the great masterpieces of the past or in the rough popu-

lar forms of the present. That, however, which makes him a real poet rather than a clever versifier is his power of realism, his love of nature in all her aspects, his determination to study her at first hand, to use the Classical authors as they should be used, that is, as aids to finish and refinement, as providing a standard rather than as a model. Thus, though the influence of all the great Latin and Italian poets may be traced in turn, there is no obvious imitation, and even when the outline is a copy, the scheme of colour is original, and this is why Lorenzo is the freshest poet of his century. Other writers, it is true, loved nature, but Lorenzo's love was the more liberal. Tuscan song and Tuscan painting have been called the worship of spring. This was natural enough; in a climate where winters are severe and summers scorching, spring seemed the one poetic season. Thus spring and its flowers, and among the flowers the more obvious blossoms, roses and violets, are the perpetual theme of Lorenzo's contemporaries. But the master is not content with this. He can indeed sing the spring, and none of his fellows, not even Politian, can do it better. As examples may be taken, the stages in the rosebud's life from the *Corinto* or, a wider theme, the migration of the flocks to the upland pastures. The flocks pass bleating up the mountain paths, the young lambs trotting in their mothers' steps; the one just newly born is carried in the shepherd's arms, while his fellow bears a lamed sheep upon his shoulders. A third peasant is riding the mare with foal carrying the posts and nets to

guard the flocks from wolves; the dog runs to and fro proud of his post as escort to the party. Then comes a little touch of nature unidealised—the flock is shut within the nets, the shepherds fall to their meal of milk rolls and biscuits, and then fall fearlessly asleep and snore all night. Equally well, however, can the poet describe a winter scene, the crackling of the leaves beneath the hunter's feet, his quarry vainly seeking to hide his tracks, the fir standing green against the white mountains, or bending its branches beneath its load of snow, the laurel standing young and joyous amid the dry leafless trees, the solitary bird that still finds hiding in the stout cypress which is doing battle with the winds, the olive grove on a balmy sunny shore, whose leaves show green or silver according to the setting of the wind.

In the troubles of life Lorenzo finds his materials as in its joys; he enters keenly into the sufferings of the peasant, and of animals; he describes one of the common woodland fires, a chance spark of the flint catching the dry leaves, then spreading to brushwood, and then gaining on ancient oak and ilex, destroying the shadowy forest homes, the pleasant nests, the lairs where generations of wild things had stalled themselves, and then the wild rout of terror-stricken creatures bellowing and shrieking down the echoing dale. At another moment we see the flood of the Ombrone, with its turbid yellow waters grinding stone on stone, bearing along the plain its mountain spoil of trunk and bough; the peasant's wife is just in time to free, with trembling hand, the cattle from the stall, she carries pickaback her weeping

little son; behind her is the elder daughter laden with poor household store, and flax and wool; the pigs and oxen are swimming all ascare; the old shed floats bobbing on the water's crest, the peasant, perched upon the cottage roof, sees his poor wealth, his labour, and his hope go under, and yet for fear of his own life he never moans nor utters word, nor seems to take count of all that is most dear, for so the greater sorrow drives away the less.

It is this close observance of nature which makes Lorenzo always fresh, whether he is describing ants or bees, or a line of cranes stretching across the sky towards a sunny spot, or the hunted deer taking its last desperate leap, the straining eyes of the baffled dogs, the oxen, already wearied, struggling with their load of stones and logs to dam the flood, the tired bird falling to sea because it fears to light upon a ship, or the cow bellowing as she returns from the slaughter-house where she has left her calf.

To this may be added that Lorenzo, though in an inferior degree, strove, as did Dante, to make poetry the vehicle for all the thought and feeling of his day. As an example of the latter may be taken the contrast drawn in the *Silve* between the miseries of insomnia in the long winter nights, and their cheerful joys for those who are content. Again his description of the golden age is redeemed from plagiarism and commonplace, not only by his true feeling for animal life, but by his subtle treatment of the unhappiness entailed by man's half knowledge. The influence of contemporary thought upon his poems, may be traced in the Platonic ideas therein

incrusted. The reader may find these not only in the *Altercazione*, which is professedly a Platonic essay, but in several of the lauds, in the *Silve*, in the sonnets, and especially in the prose commentary on the sonnets. They are at times purely spiritual and mystical, expressing the craving for absorption in the unknown nature of the Godhead, for death as being the happiest state because it rids the soul of all material qualities; at other moments they form the explanation and justification of human love, which is the seeking after perfect beauty, after the highest good, a return from the material to the divine from which all beauty emanated. Here the idea of mediation is constantly present; the image which is conceived in the lover's heart becomes a reality, and its voice a heavenly harmony, appreciated by eye and ear as the highest senses, the material gateways to the spiritual world, the image becoming the link between the imperfection of the lover and the perfection of the loved object. Thus it is that Lorenzo's love poems, notwithstanding the grosser side of his nature, are peculiarly abstract, and unusually free from material and sensuous expressions. The mistress to whom Lorenzo wrote was, indeed, not improbably impersonal; it would at least from his sonnets be difficult to picture her personality.

It is this wealth not only of form but of material that sets Lorenzo above his contemporaries, and endows him with more of modern interest. It necessarily entailed its drawbacks. If his conceptions are powerful his execution is often rough and crude, gold mixed with earth, but true gold for all that, as Mu-

ratori wrote. No sonnet, or *canzone*, or laud is perfect, though in most, or all, there are thoughts or tones which redeem the barbarisms, the Latinisms, or the lack of finish. Poetry, perhaps, was strained to express that of which she was incapable; the mould was not equal to the material which it was meant to shape. Lorenzo, moreover, was a rapid writer, he died young, he had no leisure, no possibility of revision, his verses have come down to us rough-hewn, as they first left his hand. Yet many modern readers will prefer the crude power of Lorenzo to the polished sweetness of Politian.

The literary activity of Lorenzo and his age was almost confined to poetry, if exception be made of the philosophical disquisitions and dialogues of the Platonic school, and the formal letters intended for publication. Prose has not yet emancipated itself from the Classical leading-strings; Latin, if not Greek, is still the conventional medium; the philosophy is after all a glorified *delectus*, while the aim of the epistolary art is to resemble Cicero or Pliny even yet more closely than did Petrarch or Salutati. It is interesting to compare the formal prose of Lorenzo and especially of Politian with their every-day correspondence. In the latter the writer says what he has to say, generally in haste, often with much humour, always with good sense, but there is no attempt at grace or style, the letters are written in rough Tuscan, so rough at times that, except by the expert, they are untranslatable. Far more interesting than the Classical effusions, they nevertheless cannot be said to fall under the head of literature. The pre-

dominance of poetry was natural; not only was verse the form of expression appropriate to the fanciful and picturesque stage of the Renaissance, but in any vernacular revival it is usual that poetry should take the lead.

Prose was soon to follow. Most boys are taught the moral but mendacious commonplace that great authors, even though they write for princes, were born to liberty. The writers who graced the republican age of Florence—and the spirit of this may be extended to 1530—were born under Lorenzo's sway. It may reasonably be urged that, but for his championship of the Italian tongue, Machiavelli and Guicciardini would have written Latin. It is at least a symptom of Lorenzo's influence that his brother-in-law Bernardo Rucellai refused to write in Latin, much to the embarrassment of Erasmus, his correspondent, who never would learn Italian, for fear it should spoil his Latin style. It is just, however, to bear in mind that Savonarola threw his weight on the same side. The spiritual poetry of Savonarola and his followers has in Benivieni and in Pico a direct connection with that of Lorenzo and his mother. But the secular muse fled from Florence on Lorenzo's death. Florence no longer possessed the hegemony, still less the monopoly, of Italian song.

Few men now have time and talent both to know and write. The specialisation of modern life tends to the divorce of literature and learning. In the fifteenth century the union was complete, the honeymoon had scarcely passed. Hence it was that Lorenzo, the patron of literature, naturally strove to

supply the needs of learning. One of his early acts was to revive the decayed University of Pisa. In the previous year, 1471, an attempt was made to organise university studies at Florence, but it was found that lodgings were defective, while the pleasures of the capital were distracting. Pisa was dull empty houses plentiful, while the sea gave easy communication. It was part, no doubt, of Lorenzo's scheme to restore the prosperity and win the loyalty of the fallen rival; his enemies have thought that he wished to increase the value of the property which he had purchased. The chairs of Philosophy and Philology remained at Florence, but the other Faculties now had their home at Pisa. The University received generous endowment from the State, and this was supplemented by Papal benefaction, and by the private generosity of Lorenzo. The two branches of the University were regulated by the same statutes and were placed under the same governmental board of five, of whom one was elected from the Lesser Arts. Lorenzo was an original member of the board and took the keenest interest in the new foundation: if it had not the greatest number of students, he said at least it should have the best professors. Law, Theology, and Medicine were, indeed, admirably represented.

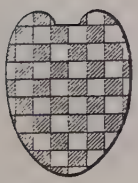
The University had at first chequered fortunes; for, even as the plague at Oxford, the malaria occasioned the migration of the students to neighbouring towns. The sanitary condition, however, improved with the growth of population; central schools were built to replace the isolated lectur

rooms, and grass-grown Pisa once more grew gay with undergraduate life. The State insisted upon a Pisan degree for all academical posts, and for all practitioners in law; migration to foreign Universities was discouraged. The foundation of a University was at this time regarded in Italy, as in Germany, as the outward expression of the unity of the territory, and the fact that its larger branch was established at Pisa pointed to the fact that the Medici were lords, not so much of Florence, as of Tuscany. Lorenzo's large estates in the immediate neighbourhood, and his love for hawking and hunting in the Pisan hills, brought him into frequent contact with his nursling. The University was not, however, frequented by Tuscans only; ultramontanes resorted thither, and it was popular with young Roman ecclesiastics. Its students were no mere bookworms, for not only was the future Leo X. a student, but Cæsar Borgia, and Alessandro Farnese, the magnificent Paul III. Studies at Florence seemed hardly to suffer from the separation; her chairs were distinguished by the Hellenists Andronicus of Thessalonica, and Demetrius Chalcondylas, by Landino and Ficino, while the old quarrel between the Medici and the greatest Italian Greek scholar of the earlier age was healed by the recall of Filelfo to a chair in 1481. The old man arrived in time to die on the scene of his early fame.

It need hardly be said that Lorenzo was indefatigable in the collection and copying of *codices;* Lascaris, for instance, was twice sent to Greece, and on the second visit searched the monasteries of Mount Athos. The Laurentian Library claims Lo-

renzo as its founder, though the building was left unfinished, and the books underwent varying fortunes until they were housed by Clement VII in their present home. Printing reached Florence late for the very reason, perhaps, that she was so wealthy in MSS. Type, as a mere mechanical art was sometimes despised by the book-collector, as was artillery by the condottiere; no printed volume found admission to the choice library of Urbino. Lorenzo's circle was less prejudiced, and after the printing of the first book in November, 1471, the art forged rapidly ahead; a Florentine, Bernardo Cennini, was foremost among Italian printers to cut and found his type. It was characteristic of the city of Dante that a commentary on Virgil, was the first book to issue from her press. Within twelve months the *Filocopo* of Boccaccio followed, while Dante himself must wait until 1480, heading Savonarola by only just a year. But the glory of the Florentine press was its earliest Greek book, the *editio princeps* of Homer, printed in 1488 by the Venetian Alopa. The text was corrected by Chalcondylas, the expense was borne by Bernardo and Neri dei Nerli, and it was dedicated to Piero de' Medici, in whose face six years later their brother Jacopo shut the door of the Palazzo Pubblico. Printing led gradually to the engraving of illustrations. Of these the first adorned the allegory named the *Monte Santo di Dio*, printed by the German Niccolas Lorenz in 147[illegible]. These were followed in 1482 by plates roughly adapted from Botticelli's drawings for Landino's commentary on the *Commedia*. The very experi-

ment proved the failure of a method too costly, but it was not till 1490 that wood-cutting is known to have been introduced at Florence; though it is possible that the great bird's-eye view, of which a representation is here given, was previous to that date; posterior it cannot have been, for the Strozzi palace is still invisible. Among the very first Florentine books illustrated by wood-cuts is the *Arithmetic* of Calandro dedicated to Lorenzo's youngest son. But notwithstanding the delicacy of the engraving, Florence must in book production yield to the rival Republic.



Pistoia.

Cortona.

Leo Battista Alberti: a plaque attributed to himself.

CHAPTER X.

Art of the Medicean period—Influence of Lorenzo—Sculpture, painting, and architecture—Music at Florence.

IT is more difficult to trace Lorenzo's footprints in the field of art than in that of letters. In literature, he was first a prentice and then a master passed; he was a member and not the least distinguished of the guild. Patronage was merged in fellowship. In art he could have no such mastership and no such fellowship. That he was trained in drawing is almost certain; it was an essential feature in the education of the aristocracy, and in this department of all others the Medici are little likely to have been behind. Lorenzo, indeed, is credited with having

produced a design for the façade of the Cathedral, which was afterwards executed in wood by San Savino to greet his son Leo X. on his triumphal entry into Florence. Yet he can scarcely be classed among Art's craftsmen. His influence must have been chiefly that of patronage, of pecuniary aid and personal encouragement. Even so it is not easy to define this influence. Art is more conservative than literature, not so immediately sensitive to changing atmosphere. The individual artist depends more closely upon his school than does the man of letters. If, as Vasari says, the master was more than a parent, he was much more than a patron. In Florence art had long flowed with so strong a stream that it was beyond any one man's power to turn its current.

With this current, moreover, Lorenzo himself was moving. Art was at this moment natural and Tuscan, not, as literature, dominated by Classicism, although containing an archæological element quite in harmony with the patron's interests. When Lorenzo reached his manhood a school of realists already existed, all revelling in nature, drawing their inspiration from her, representing life as they saw it. The actual human form, anatomy, physiognomy, relief, linear and aërial perspective, landscape and animal life, these were the essential objects of study. The majority, indeed, in their passion for realism had far outstripped their archetype Masaccio, and, yet further, Giotto. Angelico the one follower of an ideal religious school had walked alone, except at the moments when his pupil Benozzo Gozzoli fol-

lowed him. Thus Lorenzo's artists would naturally follow in these lines, subject indeed to certain variations, upon which the patron probably had some influence. We see, for instance, in his favourite artists a fresh growth of fancy, and the dawning of a new day of idealism.

A river may pass under different names in its several reaches, and yet its waters are the same, nor is it always easy to fix the traditional limits of the names. It may be convenient to speak of a Medicean age of art, but Masaccio, whom all the century copied, disappeared from view before the accession of the Medici, and belonged essentially to the Albizzi period. Fra Angelico and Castagno died respectively in 1455 and 1457, but both may be said to belong to an earlier age, and so too Uccello who saw the first days of Lorenzo's rule. Within the Medicean period, also, it is difficult to stake out a Laurentian epoch. Filippo Lippi died in the year of Lorenzo's accession, but he left a distinct inheritance. Benozzo Gozzoli, who outlived him, was born in 1420, and already had painted round the chapel walls of the palace in the Via Larga that stately procession of the kings, who are, in fact, the Medici in all their glory. Of sculptors and architects Brunelleschi and Ghiberti belonged to the earlier Medicean age, but Donatello and Desiderio lived nearly to Lorenzo's accession and Michelozzo just survived it. Lorenzo inherited Luca della Robbia, an old man in 1469, though he lived till 1482, Rossellino, Mino da Fiesole, the Pollaiuoli and Verrocchio. The latter, however, had had as yet no important commission,

and belongs to the Laurentian group, together with the architects Giuliano da San Gallo, and Benedetto da Maiano. A name which must not be omitted is that of Leo Battista Alberti, man of art and man of letters, architect and theorist, the intellectual forefather of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Alberti died in 1472, but he had long lived his restless roving life, he was little likely to make his permanent home in Florence, or to serve a single patron. His most characteristic work, Malatesta's temple at Rimini, was already as far completed as it was ever destined to be. Yet one or two facts connect Alberti with Lorenzo, for whose near relations, the Rucellai, his finest Florentine buildings, their palace, and the façade of Sta. Maria Novella, were executed. Landino describes him as a bird of passage resting with the young Medici in the beech woods of Camaldoli, and taking the lead in a Platonic dialogue. A practical Ferrarese ambassador has left it on record that Ercole d'Este applied to Lorenzo for his copy of Alberti's book on architecture, which the owner sent with a request for its speedy return, for he prized it highly and constantly studied it.

If the beginning of the Laurentian age is somewhat indeterminate, its close is more definite. Savonarola's influence distinctly checked the tendencies of contemporary Florentine art, or at all events turned them into other channels, and that because his art was so closely interwoven with the social threads of Lorenzo's lifetime. The artists who were more intimately connected with the Medicean

household were in their various ways most directly affected by the religious revival. For Botticelli, Piero di Cosimo, Lorenzo di Credi, Cronaca, for the younger students, Michelangelo, Fra Bartolommeo, even for the anti-Savonarolist Albertinelli, the prince's death and the friar's preaching made a crisis in their lives. Thus, after all, art in Florence did, if slowly, follow the prevailing moods, and whatever influence Lorenzo exercised on these must find its reflex in the character of art. If we stand far enough apart it is possible to see the Laurentian period shaping and separating itself. There is, perhaps, a stronger line of demarcation to distinguish it from that which precedes and that which follows, than can he drawn between the ages of Cosimo and the Albizzi. Cosimo was in art, as in letters, a generous, intelligent patron. Lorenzo was in the wider sense an artist, he possessed that magnetic sympathy, which not only receives impressions, but inevitably, if unconsciously, affects the mode of expression in others. This quality may be a source of weakness as of strength, it springs from the passions rather than from the brain, it is more ductile and less critical. Yet to the biographer it has this merit that it gives a *cachet* to his hero, stamping him as at once the creature and the creator of his age.

The connection of art with society was rendered closer by its increasing secularism, to which both the study of the antique and the new realism contributed. Art was no longer exclusively the handmaid of religion, she was serving two masters and gave most of her attention to the younger and more exacting

In Florence, as in other towns, the decoration and the furniture of the public buildings and of the halls of the corporations were affording much employment, while the decorative arts were keeping pace with, or outstripping, the increasing magnificence of domestic architecture. The ornamentation of churches was rather following than leading the prevailing fashion. Of this the most remarkable example is the decoration introduced by Alberti in his great work at Rimini, which is rather a model for a palace of delight than for a house of prayer.

To their employment in such social uses is due in part the extraordinary versatility of the later fifteenth-century artists, and this was in complete harmony with Lorenzo's character. Never were the arts and crafts so inextricably intertwined. This has been traced to the education of so many artists in the goldsmith's trade, which early familiarised them with architecture on a tiny scale, with modelling and with colouring, while printing and engraving proceeded naturally from the only class which had the preliminary training of eye and hand. A goldsmith would turn his hand to bronze and then to marble, while the sketches for his models easily led him on to painting. The model in clay became an end in itself, especially when Luca della Robbia had invented his coloured glaze, which was welcomed as an effective and economical substitute for marble relief. Clay in all its forms became a fashionable medium; in coloured portrait busts and stucco ornament, modeller and painter had each his share.

Nor was architecture isolated. Architects were

almost invariably carvers in wood and workers in *marqueterie*. They were frequently sculptors, for sculpture was an essential element of the building. The inlaying of wood, *intarsia*, is but a form of pictorial art, and this again connects itself with the inlaying of metal, the exquisite *niello* of the fifteenth century. Employed not only on domestic and religious works but on fortifications, architects became engineers and practical artillerists, for the cannon was almost incorporated with the building. Thus, while the great medallists cast the guns, the most distinguished architect might be sent to direct their fire. On the other hand, the study of Roman remains and the keen interest in linear perspective made the painter almost an architect. This may be seen before Lorenzo's time; for instance, in some of Filippo Lippi's work; but the employment of the leading Florentine artists at Rome for the decoration of the Sistine Chapel between 1480 and 1482 greatly stimulated this passion for architectural detail, affecting Ghirlandaio, Botticelli, Rosselli, Piero di Cosimo, and Filippino Lippi. Mosaic again just at this period received a fresh impulse at Florence, at Orvieto, and Siena. This brought the painter into direct contact with the builder, and not merely the fresco painter who had long had such connection, but the miniaturists, such as Gherardo and Attavante, for mosaic is but miniature enlarged.

In this intercommunion of the arts it was natural that they should borrow of each other, and not always to their advantage. Not only does the sculptor gild or colour his marble or his bronze, but he aban-

dons the statuesque for the picturesque and dramatic, strives to express the emotions of the moment, to emphasise his story by elaborate background, and to gain by variety of plane the effect of aërial perspective. On the other hand, the relief is at times so slight as to almost assume the character of line-drawing, while the painter is struggling for the roundness, the projection of sculpture, or giving to his figures and drapery the hard clear outline of metal. The subjects also, borrowed from the antique, affect the method. Gems and cameos give suggestions to the sculptor, especially for instance to Donatello, while the medal, as with Piero della Francesca and Botticelli, becomes the example for the portrait.

Vasari mentions as a peculiarity of this age that the best artists, sculptors, and painters condescended to work on furniture. Botticelli at the height of his fame set his pictures in panelling. Any visitor to the South Kensington Museum may illustrate this by examining the excellence of the work in the collection of marriage chests. Of such chests many of the valued pictures in our galleries are but panels. They show, moreover, in their material the versatility of art, being sometimes of carved, at others of inlaid wood, now faced with painted panels, now with coloured stucco; even wax was employed for kindred purposes. Thus, too, workers in bronze would produce the most trifling domestic objects. Pollaiuolo, painter, sculptor, medallist, would not refuse a commission for an ink-stand or a candlestick. Similarly the great painters were employed

on banners for processions, on designs for costumes, for tapestries, and for carpets.

For these minor arts Lorenzo's palace was a museum. Every distinguished stranger would admire his furniture, his carpets, his plate, and bronzes. The family collection of gems and medals was increased by him from about 920 to 2300; the death of Paul II. had given an unequalled opportunity for purchase. Nor was this collection sterile. Lorenzo had been wrongly credited with originating the modern school of gem engraving; this much is true, however, that he made this art an important and permanent industry in Florence. Majolica also attracted his attention. The foundation of the great Medicean factory at Cafaggiuolo is probably later than his day, and indeed the bloom of the art belongs to the following century. The Adriatic coast was, however, already famous, and two fictile vases, which one of the Malatesta sent, should, wrote Lorenzo, be valued more than silver. Ambassadors and banking agents were active in the cause of the Medicean collections. Luigi Lotti has by night excavated three antique fauns in a monastery; Giuliano della Rovere had said that nothing must be touched, but Luigi could secure them for fifty ducats. Giovanni Antonio has been to Ostia and seen an ancient ship discovered in the ditch; he sends some of its copper nails, also the head of a baby. San Gallo, when offered rich payment for his plans of a palace for the King of Naples, begged only for antique statues, which he presented to Lorenzo. In these ways was formed the collection of statuary gath-

ered in the Medici gardens stretching along the Via Larga. Here Bertoldo and Verrocchio would repair or complete the broken and defective statues, and here under the former was formed that short-lived school, which yet had such vital influence on future art. Some have made merry over forgeries which deceived Lorenzo, but the man who never makes a bad mistake will never form a fine collection.

Of the greater artists of Lorenzo's time it is here possible only to treat of those who belong entirely to his age and circle. Thus Luca della Robbia must be excluded, for his art was perfected while Lorenzo was but a boy. The case of Benozzo Gozzoli is peculiar. His frescoes in the Campo Santo at Pisa (1469–1481) were executed at the moment when Lorenzo was eagerly engaged in restoring the prosperity of the fallen town. These differ essentially from his work in the Medici palace, which recalls the influence of Gentile da Fabriano and Fra Angelico, whereas the Pisan frescoes may be classed rather with the more modern productions of Ghirlandaio. Once more did Benozzo do honour to his patrons, the Medici, who are represented as watching the building of the Tower of Babel, in which may perhaps be symbolised Lorenzo's bantling University. How full was the artist's sympathy with university life may be judged by the frescoes at San Gemigniano, a few years earlier in date, which show Augustine as the young professor escorted by a troop of nobles to take possession of his chair.

Other artists of Lorenzo's period worked chiefly away from Florence. Thus Giuliano da Maiano,

though in 1477 he was architect to the Cathedral, was long absent in Tuscany and the towns of the Adriatic, and finally settled at Ferrante's Court at Naples, where he built the Capuan gate, dying, much to his master's grief, in 1490. The correspondence is extant wherein the King begs Lorenzo to send him another architect, Lorenzo selecting a Florentine, who was working at Mantua for Gonzaga. It has been laid to Lorenzo's discredit that he neglected the greatest artists of his age, that Alberti and Leonardo found their work elsewhere, and that Perugino, though no Florentine, was painting in the city and found small encouragement from its master. In this obscuring smoke there may be a modicum of flame. Lorenzo had neither the nature nor the opportunities of a student. Men of genius who die young have the presentiment that they need results. In art, as in politics, Lorenzo was, perhaps, impatient. Art for him must be the mistress of the present rather than the mother of the future. Its *raison d'être* was the adornment of social life. Alberti rarely finished, and Leonardo in these days seldom passed beyond experiment. Lorenzo's favourite artists, Verrocchio, Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, were peculiarly prolific.

Apart from this the accusation is unjust. Alberti outlived Lorenzo's accession by but three years, he had long wandered away from Florence. Leonardo's reputation was made later. His great genius was indeed, recognised in Verrocchio's workshop, but no finished picture can be ascribed to this early stage. Far from neglecting him, Lorenzo admitted him to

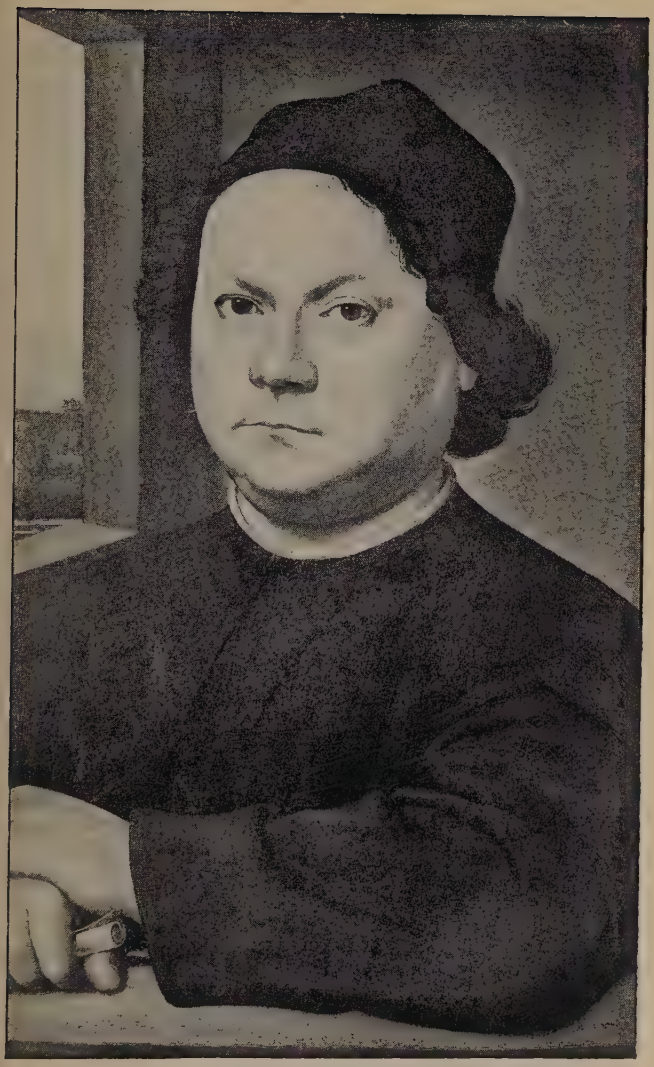
is gardens and his house, and gave him a salary nd commission. Without Medicean influence he ould scarcely have received the order for an altar- iece for the chapel of the Palazzo Pubblico, which, ndeed, he failed to finish. Above all, it was with orenzo's recommendation that he was sent in 1482 o the Court of Milan, where he made his fame. It s not the test of a true patron to hinder for selfish nds the advancement of a rising artist. Of Peru- ino little can be said. His better known works be- ng to a later age, but that he was already held in epute is proved by the fact that he was summoned o Rome by Sixtus IV., that he was a member of ne committee to select a model for the façade of he Cathedral, and that he was in 1482 commissioned o paint a hall for the Signoria.

If Lorenzo set Leonardo on the road to glory, he rew the boy Michelangelo into his own household om Ghirlandaio's studio. The young genius may ave wandered accidentally into the Medici gardens ith his friend Granacci, or both may have been defi- tely selected for training by Bertoldo. The story well known of his attracting the attention of the æcenas. He had hewn a block of marble into e mask of a grinning faun. Lorenzo, as he passed, as struck by the execution. Patron and critic of a alistic school, he told the boy that the head of so d a creature would have lost some teeth, where- on the student struck out a front tooth with his isel. There is no reason to doubt the tale, nether the mask that is shown in the Bargello be e very faun's or no. Lorenzo persuaded the boy's

father to let him take him into his home. Ludovico Buonarroti was a poor yeoman, and, as a bribe, Lorenzo asked him to look about for any place in Florence which would suit his needs. "You will never be a rich man," he said, when Ludovico at length shyly begged for a lowly berth in the customs.

Henceforth Michelangelo was practically Lorenzo's son, living in his palace, clothed at his expense, sharing his meals and, if he were first at table, sitting next his host. In the afternoons Lorenzo would take the boy and show him any rarity which had been added to his collection, asking his opinion on the purchase. Thus Michelangelo lived until, when he was just eighteen, he lost his patron. Few studies in art are more interesting than to trace the influences of what, from some aspects, may seem a dying and decadent school upon the two giants who were its legitimate offspring. Widely as they diverged, the older and the younger brother, Leonardo and Michelangelo, learned, as did Lorenzo, their lessons at nature's knees. Both were Tuscans to the bone, though Leonardo's home was in the corn-lands of the lower Arno, and Michelangelo was born amid the wooded rocks upon the Casentino slopes, and was reared on the quarried hillside of Settignano.

Florence may have been the chief, but it was by no means the only centre of art in Italy. Even if we set aside the early Venetian School, Andrea Mantegna of Mantua, Luca Signorelli of Cortona and Piero della Francesca of Borgo San Sepolcro might vie with any of the artists of the Laurentian



ANDREA VERROCCHIO.

Portrait (questioned by some authorities) by Lorenzo di Credi in the Uffizi Gallery.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

ge. From the first two we know that Lorenzo rdered pictures. Nor did he confine his commis-ions to his own country. The bank at Bruges rought the Medici into contact with Netherland rt. Hence came the choicest products of the Flem-sh looms, and hence, too, the pictures of Jan Van Eyck, Pieter Christophsen, and Memling. In one espect, however, Lorenzo had not the *flair* of his lder contemporary, Federigo of Urbino; there is o reason to believe that he foresaw the limitless uture of oil-painting.

Verrocchio was probably the first artist to whom orenzo and his brother gave an important commis-ion, and this had been the tomb of their father and ncle in San Lorenzo. He had, however, already orked for the Medici, for he had made the simple ab of bronze which marked the grave of Cosimo. Moreover, in the Cathedral he had cast for Luca ella Robbia the heavy door of the sacristy which as to save Lorenzo's life, and his work was the lded ball and cross which in 1471 were hoisted nid Te Deums to crown the cupola. Henceforth errocchio found a generous patron in Lorenzo. For m were cast the two masterpieces of bronze, which lorence still possesses, the *David*, in the Bargello, nd the *Boy with the Dolphin*, in the court of the alazzo Vecchio. The latter was designed for a untain at Careggi, while the former was sold to the gnoria to decorate its palace entrance. Verrocchio rved for the Medici palace a marble relief of the irgin, while two reliefs of *Alexander* and *Darius* ere sent by Lorenzo to Matthias Corvinus, King

of Hungary, who afterwards ordered a marble fountain from the artist.

With such favour Verrocchio became the fashion. He executed the bronze group of the *Saviour and St. Thomas*, one of the glories of Or San Michele, and in competition with Antonio Pollaiuolo showed his goldsmith's skill in the *Beheading of St. John the Baptist* for the altar in the Baptistery. In the Mercato Nuovo the hours on the clock were struck by one of Verrocchio's bronze *putti*, those delightful children who, ever young, yet had so long a life in art, and who all may claim Verrocchio as their sponsor. For Sixtus IV. he cast great statues of the Apostles, at Pistoia he worked at the splendid tomb of Cardinal Forteguerra, and as the most immortal memorial of his greatness he designed the equestrian statue of the Condottiere Colleoni for the government of Venice. The model indeed was Verrocchio's, but, dying in 1488, he did not live to cast his work which owes its completion, not to the favourite pupil Lorenzo di Credi to whom the master would have entrusted it, but to the mould of Leopardi.*

There was in Verrocchio much that would please Lorenzo. He was as versatile in art as his patron was in life and letters. Educated as a goldsmith he learnt sculpture from Donatello with whom he probably worked in San Lorenzo, while Filippo Lippi is said to have influenced his painting. Thus he became a sculptor both in bronze and marble and a painter, establishing, moreover, a taste for coloured portrait busts in terra cotta, among which

* It is not certain that Verrocchio completed more than the model of the horse.

one has been recognised as representing Giuliano de' Medici, and another Lorenzo. It was, moreover, from Verrocchio's drawings that the three wax figures of Lorenzo were modelled, to celebrate his escape from the Pazzi assassins. He elevated, indeed, modelling in wax from an industry to an art. Verrocchio was, as his patron in poetry, rough and harsh in execution; he misses beauty in the attempt to seize expression; he does violence to his medium, straining it beyond its natural powers. Thus in the relief, now in the Bargello, of the death of Lorenzo's aunt, Francesca Tornabuoni—if, indeed, it be by Verrocchio's hand—marble does service to express a poignant reality of sorrow unfitted for the plastic arts, and for which even the brush would scarce be an adequate vehicle. But everything human must be the subject for Verrocchio's chisel, and herein lie at once his shortcomings and his interest. To many minds there is between Donatello and Verrocchio a retrograde step. They move, perhaps, rather in different planes. Verrocchio deserts the Greek, which Donatello made his model; he will have nothing to do with types; he may select his model, but he paints him as he finds him, exaggerating perhaps his fleshly failings to display his own deep knowledge of anatomy. Thus it is in the figure of our Saviour both in the group of St. Thomas and in Verrocchio's one undoubted * picture, *The Baptism*, in the Academy.

* Undoubted in this sense that Verrocchio certainly had a share in it. One of the angels has usually been attributed to his pupil Leonardo, but Richter points out that both angels, Christ, and the landscape are in oils and concludes from this that they are by Leonardo's hand, for Verrocchio never deserted tempera.

In the latter, the two attendant angels seem almost intended to redeem the ugliness of the two chief figures. The same departure from classicism, the same lack of type, may be seen in the slim peasant youth who does service for the victorious David, but let those who would pass it by as unworthy of its subject pause to catch the subtlety of expression which would alone betray the secret of Leonardo's education.

Verrocchio loved nature in all her forms, in her problems of perspective and anatomy, and in her movement. He strove to catch the expression of the moment. Thus it is better in looking at Verrocchio's works to pass and repass, but not to linger long. It seems almost as if the expression must vary or the figure move if the spectator stays to watch. This sense of motion may be illustrated by the action of St. John in *The Baptism*, by the beheading of St. John in the silver altar-piece, which in itself forms an epoch in goldsmith's work, in the pictures of Tobias in the Academy and the National Gallery, attributed with much reason to Verrocchio, but above all in the little boy who for ever half runs and half flits across the courtyard of the Palace, while the dolphin ceaselessly struggles in the arms, whose pressure sends the water spurting from the nostrils.

It was in this search for realism that Verrocchio introduced the custom of making casts from hands and feet and other accessible portions of the living body. Though he did not invent the practice of taking casts of the faces of the dead, it was due to his influence that this became a common form of

family portraiture in the leading Florentine houses. So also he paid great attention to details and accessories, simple and subordinate to the main composition as they are. To him is ascribed the origin of Leonardo's flower-spangled rocks, while under his training pupils strove for atmosphere in landscape, and learnt their lesson in lights and shadows and reflections. Whether with success or not Verrocchio attempted a revolution in the treatment of draperies, struggling to break through the limitations imposed by metal on the representation of textile fabrics, imitating, not only the actual folds, but the material, the stiff well-lined stuffs that were then in fashion. The crudity and harshness of his work Vasari attributes to his want of natural facility, to his being an artist, not born, but made by dint of infinite industry. The same result would, however, flow from the attempt to carry to its logical limits the representation of nature, which was the artistic heritage of his time. It is striking, though not unnatural, that it is from the pupils in Verrocchio's workshop, from Perugino and Leonardo, that the reaction towards a type of beauty begins, that Leonardo's precepts for the formation of such a type by the process of selection are the reverse of the attitude which his master adopted towards his models.

If this were reaction it was not revolt. Verrocchio was a great educator, perhaps the greatest of Lorenzo's age; he was an influence extending far beyond his individual work. This influence was educational in the truest sense, manifesting itself in artists so widely different as Perugino and Botticelli, as

Lorenzo di Credi and Leonardo, yet never cramping the tastes or faculties of the pupil, but rather encouraging them to develop freely in their natural direction. The personal relations of Verrocchio to Botticelli and Perugino are indeed obscure, but Leonardo and Lorenzo di Credi worked together in his studio, and so close was the æsthetic relation to each other, that it is often impossible to distinguish between their drawings. Leonardo's full development lies beyond our scope; Lorenzo di Credi long outlived the Laurentian age, and becoming an ardent worshipper of Savonarola sacrificed to the flames all the work which did not tend to the edification of the soul. His few surviving pictures are chiefly on religious subjects, full of delicate sentiment, but to him also are attributed the portrait of his master, and a fine study of the nude, both in the Uffizi. This latter contrived to escape the pyre of Vanities, and it is interesting to compare it with the *Venus* or the *Truth* of Botticelli. Florentine artists were passing beyond the somewhat conventional representation of Eve, and having resort at once to nature and to the classical models within their reach.

Vasari describes Lorenzo di Credi as skilled in portraiture, and as an admirable copyist. The original line, however, which he struck out in the *atelier* of Verrocchio was in the gradation of colours, and in the preparation and application of oil. This he would distil with his own hands, while on his palette might be seen from twenty to thirty shades of colour ranging from the darkest to the most luminous. Not a speck of dust was to be suffered in his studio, lest

it should spoil his surface, and it was, thinks Vasari, the excessive minuteness of his care which stood in the way of his development. Yet he is an attractive figure, this delicately fingered, conscientious draughtsman and colourist, beside whose pictures all others seemed rough and careless, with his yearnings towards the highest life, and his devotion to his master whom he never left until he had brought him back dead from Venice, and lovingly laid him in Sant' Ambrogio.

If any artist can be described as the Court painter of the Medici it is Sandro Botticelli. Curiously enough there is no record of any portrait of Lorenzo, but there is one at least of Giuliano, and one of young Piero holding the medal of his great-grandfather, Cosimo. The death of Simonetta Cattanei, the object of Giuliano's love, stirred the fancy of painter as of poet. To several of Botticelli's portraits this name is ascribed, though without much probability except in the case of the picture at Chantilly. Vasari mentions two portraits in profile, one of Simonetta, the other of Lucrezia Tornabuoni, "Lorenzo's wife," which is of course an error. The lady however in a portrait by Botticelli at Frankfurt wears the celebrated Medici gem of Apollo and Marsyas, while the pearls in the trimming of her dress are arranged in the form of the Medicean *palle*. Another picture of a girl, in profile with a family resemblance, was recently shown in the Italian Exhibition of 1893, and her dress too has the same pattern of pearl trimming, which is clearly not conventional.* In the picture

* In M. Müntz's *Collections des Médicis* are mentioned two heads of Lorenzo's sister Bianca, and his daughter-in-law Alfonsina.

of the *Magi* in the Uffizi Gallery is to be seen the whole family of the Medici, Cosimo and his two sons, Lorenzo and his brother, and a host of friends and relations among whom may be recognised Filippo Strozzi, Politian and the painter himself. For Lorenzo were painted the two well-known masterpieces of the *Spring*, and the *Birth of Venus;* for him too a Pallas,* a favourite subject with Lorenzo, a St. Sebastian, and a Bacchus, and the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the abbey of San Giusto at Volterra, which has been recently in the market. It was doubtless on Lorenzo's recommendation that Botticelli was invited by Sixtus IV. to adorn his chapel in the Vatican, and it was Lorenzo who sheltered and succoured him when the thriftless artist returned with empty pockets. He was employed moreover on the frescoes in the palace of the Signoria, and once again in company with Ghirlandaio on the mosaics in the Cathedral which were interrupted by Lorenzo's death. Above all it may be remembered that to Botticelli was given the commission to paint the frescoes of the hanging Pazzi on the exterior of the Signoria's palace.

Naturally enough Botticelli became popular in the Medicean circle, even as he has been of late. He celebrated the marriage of Giovanni Bini with Lucrezia Pucci by the four pictures which embody

*Since these lines were written a picture discovered in the private apartments at the Pitti Palace has been identified with this, although the measurements do not exactly correspond with those given by Vasari. The robe of Pallas is embroidered with the triple diamond ring, the device of Lorenzo, and the picture is believed to celebrate his return from Naples. A representation is given in this book.

Boccaccio's tale of Nastagio degli Onesti, and that of Lorenzo Tornabuoni with Giovanna degli Albizzi by the frescoes now in the Louvre, not many years ago discovered beneath superincumbent whitewash in the villa Lemmi. For the Panciatichi he painted a Pietà, for Giovanni Vespucci a series of pictures framed in walnut wood for the back of what might now be called "a cosy corner." For the veteran Medicean, Matteo Palmieri, he illustrated the alleged heresy of the neutral angels, which brought patron and picture into trouble.* This magnificent *Coronation*, with its rings of dancing figures, and its stately kneeling figures of Palmieri and his wife, rests after many vicissitudes in the National Gallery, never again to be hidden from view for lack of orthodoxy, though scouted as a supposititious offspring of Botticelli by subjective critics.† Finally, for Lorenzo's cousin and namesake he executed the magnificent series of more than ninety drawings to honour the revival of the great national poet Dante, a series which has been described as giving the surest insight into the art of the fifteenth century.

* Botticelli's orthodoxy was suspected. An acquaintance accused him of assuring him that his soul would perish with his body. Botticelli defended himself by the answer that in this case it was true, for the man was no better than a brute.

† The documentary and corroborative evidence in favour of this picture is singularly complete. Yet it is abandoned even by the more moderate art critics. They admit it to be the picture painted for Palmieri, but deny Botticelli's own hand, because the dancing angels are not all they should be. This implies that one of the first citizens of Florence, in the chief commission of his life, was content with schoolboy's work, and that no Florentine ever recognised the difference.

In what respects, then, was this favourite artist in touch with the central figure of the group for which he worked? Botticelli was the truest artistic counterpart of the literary tendencies of his day, and more especially of those of his chief patron. He is in fact at once poet and painter, a poet now lyric, now dramatic, but never epic. In him are to be found the study of nature at first hand, the love of Tuscan country life combined with the passion for stately building, the genuine freshness tempered by subtle affectation. Drawing freely from classical story, Botticelli transformed by the magic of his fancy every theme which he has made his own. On the other hand he was, as Ghirlandaio, impressed by the beauty and interest of the present. Thus his portraiture is life-like, and, as a rule, depends to the slightest possible extent upon accessories of dress or landscape. There is never any distracting magnificence in the drapery, while the head stands clear against the sky, framed, perhaps, by the woodwork of an open window, but little more. Portraiture indeed travels beyond its due bounds. The celebrated picture of the *Magi* retains hardly a shred of the traditions of a religious subject, it is the summing up of contemporary life, it is, as his latest biographer has described it, the apotheosis of the Medici.

As Lorenzo and Politian drew from every previous poetic source, so Botticelli gained inspiration from the artists who preceded or surrounded him, and yet the product is individual, all his own. Filippo Lippi was his one known master; repeatedly Botticelli

SANDRO BOTTICELLI.

Detail from the *Adoration of the Magi*, by himself in the Uffizi Gallery.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

paints the flat red and white roses that the friar loved, and the garlands of mixed roses and orange blossoms. The graceful, almost affected, turns of the head may often be seen in the master's figures, sometimes even the bulge of sleeve or caught up gown which we associate with the pupil's fancy. Verrocchio's influence may be traced in the clear metallic outlines of drapery, in the individuality of lock rather than of the single hair, which distinguishes metal from early brush work, in the dramatic movement, in the play of life in the groups of Virgin and Child. Botticelli's *Fortitude* makes no ill match to the figures of other Virtues by Pollaiuolo, in whose company it decked the hall of the Mercanzia, though close observers will trace the characteristic difference. Elsewhere there are reminiscences of the masculine Andrea del Castagno in this painter of slim youths and fine-drawn maidens. The *St. Ambrose* in Ognissanti was painted as a companion and a rival to Ghirlandaio's *St. Antony*, while the masterpiece of the *Magi*, above mentioned, long passed for Ghirlandaio's work. In the round pictures which Botticelli made a fashion, he applied to painting the art of the sculptors Desiderio and Donatello, while the medallist appears in several of his profile portraits, if indeed they are not due to the example of Piero della Francesca. In one at least of his later pictures, *The Entombment*, at Munich, Botticelli recalls the stiff yet pathetic treatment of the Netherland School.

Nor was antique art neglected. It may be here left an open question whether the *Venus di Medici*

was or was not in Florence; it is certain that a statue similar, if not the same, had long been known in the Tuscan city. This had a strong hold upon Botticelli's imagination; it is undoubtedly the model for the naked figure of Truth in the *Calumny of Apelles*, it is possibly the origin of the *Birth of Venus*, and of a single figure much resembling this Venus in the Museum at Berlin. Hence too may be derived the tradition, repeated by Vasari and his compeers, of the "many beautiful undraped women" which he had painted.

Notwithstanding these intertwining influences Botticelli was eminently original, every subject, every figure by his hand is transformed. Even the studies from the Venus are no copies, they are scarcely classical. So it is with his stories from Greek, or Latin, or Italian poets. In the *Calumny* indeed the scene in Lucian, which Alberti had recommended as a fitting subject for the brush, is closely followed, but critics yet differ as to the source of the *Birth of Venus*, and of the *Spring*. As to the latter even the meaning of the artist is uncertain. It is this which forms the charm of Botticelli's more imaginative pictures. There is more than mere pleasure of the eye, than harmony of line and colouring; the poetic instinct in the spectator goes out to find the kindred element in the painter. Thus as with Lorenzo, the Classical age is revived, yet blended with modern Tuscan life, and both transfigured and idealised into a newly discovered fairy-land of fancy. Even the Tuscan poets must submit to this chemical process in Botticelli's art. The

scenes drawn from Petrarch, are not quite Petrarch's Triumphs, nor the tale of Nastagio, whose dogs pursue the girl who would not love, altogether Boccaccio, though the origin of the picture is self-evident. So again the illustrations on the *Commedia* prove how deeply Botticelli had studied Dante, how fully he had absorbed his poetry, and yet they are not Dantesque, they are lyrical, dramatic, decorative, varied and vivid rather than majestic, fascinating rather than inspiring. Botticelli indeed handled Dante, as the great mediæval poet had treated Virgil. The mask is Virgil's, but the voice is Dante's; the figures are Dante's, but their movement is Botticelli's. No Italian painter has been more richly gifted with fancy than Botticelli, and thus it almost seems a contradiction in terms to class him among the realists. Yet this combination has also been discovered in his master. Nature was his mistress, but a mistress who must obey rather than command. The conscientious studies of perspective and anatomy, of flowers and drapery are always subservient to the conception of the subject. Yet these details are well worth studying even by the amateur. The artist carried to perfection the relation of drapery to the limbs which it covered. This may be illustrated by the *Mars* and *Venus* in the National Gallery, while the *Spring* is in itself a lesson in the gradations from the fully clothed figure to the slightest and subtlest drapery. In his flowers Botticelli wavers between the imaginary and the real. If he sometimes "improves upon the daffodil" he will paint a tuft of violets with exquisite realism, while other blossoms

would puzzle the most experienced botanist. He is after all only half a realist. A curious feature is that he does not in the subordinate parts of a figure copy the defects of his model, but seems to deliberately adopt a type which is defective. His ears, it is true, almost always identical, are simple and pretty, but the coarse toes and finger joints and nails are subjects of constant criticism. This want of finish may be due to the desire for results; he hurries over the extremities to bestow all his care on the parts which give expression, the eyes, the mouth, the modelling of chin and cheek-bone, and the fall of the hair round the temples. Portrait painter, as Botticelli was, even in the long-drawn figures of his more imaginative pictures, and in the sensitive wistful faces he seems to be searching for a type, but it is the type not of a painter but of a poet, not the combination of perfect physical qualities, but the selection, or perhaps the exaggeration, of forms which are least material, and which can best reveal the mysteries of life after which artist, as poet, gropes.

Historians of art have sought in painting and sculpture for the influence of the Neo-Platonism which dominated thought. They have found this in the idealists of the succeeding generation, in the selection or abstraction of beauty, which is one of the more obvious results of the philosophic doctrine. It has even been shown that Savonarola was a necessary link in this connection, and that the new school has its fount-heads in the two young artists Fra Bartolommeo and Michelangelo who early yielded to his influence. This may be true, for,

as has been said, the brush moves more slowly than the brain, and Neo-Platonism in art might easily fall behind by a generation. Yet the doctrine had many sides, and Botticelli's brain often outran his hand. It has been said that he drew no rational distinction, that his *Venus*, his *Spring*, and his *Madonna* are one and the same figure, subject merely to modifications of drapery. But the Madonna is no Phryne, nor yet a peasant girl, it is rather that the heathen goddess and the embodiment of nature approach to the Madonna, that the artist is everywhere seeking, not exactly the religious, but the spiritual and supersensuous in which all religions and all ages find a common element. And it is this which is the Platonism of Lorenzo and his immediate circle. It is instructive to compare the two pictures in Ognissanti, the *St. Jerome* of Ghirlandaio, calm and dignified, and wholly material, with the *St. Augustine* of Botticelli, who lets his hand idly hold the pen, while his head is upturned in rapt attention to hear the still small voice that spoke to Socrates and Savonarola as clearly as to St. Augustine. Has Raphael, with all his heritage of Neo-Platonic selection, painted the angels, the souls of the spheres, the movable plurality, the links between God and man, and man and Nature, as has Botticelli? It is perhaps no accident that the *Magi* was long taken for a Ghirlandaio. Masterpiece as it is, it is not characteristic of its painter. Truer to his nature is *The Nativity*, painted in 1500, where all external pomp is absent, when the three pilgrims, Savonarola and his comrades, purified by fire, are

embraced by angels, while the dancing ring on high casts down, no longer the roses of the spring of Florence, but the crowns of martyrdom, where the shepherds with their olive branches replace the rulers of Italy with their gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Thus it is with Botticelli as with Lorenzo. Picture and poem decoy the admirer into belief in the idealism of artist and author. Yet what a desperate realist was Botticelli! Who of his age has striven so constantly to paint the whole man, as he actually lived, who has strained his materials to the utmost limits to give expression to real life, which is always motion, and never rest! "Everything is motion," he seems to say with one old philosopher; "all is air," with another. Motion is indeed with Botticelli expressed by air. Both in the *Spring* and in the *Birth of Venus* he even dares to paint the wind issuing from the wind god's lungs. The breeze is everywhere. It sweeps round the lower drapery, sometimes favouring, sometimes repelling, and therefore emphasising motion. It bulges the folds caught in by the girdle at hip or waist, or by armlets at wrist and elbow. The very roses which the angels cast to earth do not fall but flutter. In the *Spring* it is by the action of wind upon trees and raiment that the transition from blustering March to the stillness of May is represented. In this relation Botticelli's use of gold may be compared with that of Ghirlandaio. The latter painter employs his gilding to give lightness and richness to his colouring. The former uses it with more definite purpose; it expresses the effects o

unlight on the tops of leaves or grasses turned for ıe moment by the wind, and so also in the *Birth of Venus* the darts of gold that flash up with every ripple give an additional sense of motion to the sun-t waters which bear the daughter of the foam owards the fluttering robe which is to be her earthly lothing.

If nature is full of air and movement, man is in erpetual action. Botticelli's methods may be de-ved from sculpture, but there is little that is statu-sque. Everyone is doing something. The very ngels which watch the Infant Saviour are not con-ent with rapt devotion, their faces are full of human terest rather than of spiritual adoration, they must eeds be employing hands or feet, straining their rms to draw back the curtains from the window hich sends the eternal breeze fluttering through ieir robes. It is by motion that character is ex-ressed as in the wonderful contrast between Judith nd her servant on their homeward way, the mistress ately and half repentant, stepping with calm dig-ty, the waiting-maid bearing her trophy to the own with hurried, eager stride, straining against the ind. This desire to express action and movement the cause of the light balance of Botticelli's figures pon the fore part of the foot. It would take little throw them off their equilibrium, says the critic. rue enough, but this is the case in life, as every otball player knows. The pose of the moment nnot safely be prolonged, and it is the moment hich Botticelli would represent. Thus even in his ost statuesque work, *The Fortitude*, the sitting

figure has a hand on the arm of her chair, and one foot drawn back as though in the act to rise.*

It is this dramatic quality which gives so much variety to Botticelli's work. Examples of this may be found not only as between picture and picture, but in the diversity of turn of head and eyes in the crowd of spectators that gather round the Magi, or in the multiplicity of action which gives life and swing to the rounds of angels dancing in the air. In the drawings for the *Commedia*, Dante and Virgil are seen in wonderful variety of movement; the Inferno, the Purgatorio, and the Paradiso seem rather the three acts of a play than the stately growth of an epic. Exaggeration is at times the necessary result, the *Calumny of Apelles* is fitted rather for the stage than the canvas, and *The Death of Lucretia*, attributed to Botticelli, is perhaps subject to the same criticism. So also, in what may be called his two Savonarolist pictures, *The Entombment* and *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, the intensity of feeling is almost beyond the range of pictorial art, and yet who would wish that he had never painted them?

Delightful as is the colouring of the fifteenth century to the unenlightened, the artist and the critic teach that the Florence in this century was not a school of colour but of drawing. Here again Botticelli is characteristic. Vasari writes that every artist sought after his sketches, for he was a master

* It is interesting to compare Botticelli's dancing figures with the Salome of his master Filippo Lippi in the cathedral at Prato. Planted firmly on one foot, the latter might swing her other to eternity.

draughtsman. This may surprise those who find in his girl's limb or that child's head a want of just proportion, but let them duly follow the rhythm of he outline and they will realise Vasari's praise. On he other hand, notwithstanding the charm of his golden red light, and his rich background of orange ree and pine and ilex, he was not a scientific colourst; his pictures indeed have been described as inted line. He abandoned, if he ever seriously ried, the experiments in medium affected by his contemporaries. His desire to express life compelled him to give roundness and relief, but this he strove to effect by more vulgar mechanical nethods than by knowledge of the laws of light nd shade. Yet he is so capricious that it is hard o state general rules. He is quoted by Leonardo s scoffing at background, as declaring that a daub f paint thrown against a wall would serve the turn f elaborate form. This was probably a paradox hrown out in argument, though, being a dramatist, he might have insisted that the action of his story hould never suffer distraction from the elaboration f its setting; that the head, as giving expression, hould stand clear against sky or against a strong, till background which defines the features. Naturally enough it has been stated that he was careless n landscape, and on this ground in his frescoes in he Sistine Chapel the careful, sympathetic scenery as been ascribed to his pupil Filippino Lippi. Yet he truth of the statement, general and particular, nay be doubted, if Botticelli's own hand painted he landscape of the *Judith*. This is full of at-

mosphere, and its grey morning light and the dim whirling cavalry skirmish are in admirable consonance with the subject and form the very harmony of tone.

His visit to Rome gave to Botticelli, as to his fellows, the passion for architecture, and scope for his knowledge of perspective. Yet even here he usually transforms. We see indeed occasionally a ruin with scrupulous exactitude of tottering stone and broken marble, but more often groups of buildings which lift the actual Florence towards the ideal Rome, which replace or glorify with gold and porphyry the cold, slate-coloured stone of the quarries of Fiesole. Thus it is that the dresses of his nymphs are not idealised on classical lines, but are creations of fancy, the robes of breezy denizens of air or woodland, as the Tuscan townsman with craving for country life would fondly see them.

Botticelli is the link between the art and the letters of the Laurentian age. He is almost a poet, even as Politian is wellnigh a painter. Each has his share in the great masterpiece by which Botticelli is best known, that *Spring* of the fifteenth-century Renaissance which passed away with Lorenzo's death. This is why we have dwelt so long upon the artist. Casting himself free from his predecessors and leaving no school behind, he is himself the creature of one passing moment. All that is in Lorenzo we find in Botticelli. Whether the patron had a direct influence upon the painter, or whether each was equally the product of the same planetary influences, it is impossible to decide. It would

seem probable that the artist's intensely sympathetic nature absorbed the qualities of his master, that Lorenzo had in his lifetime the same influence upon his art which Savonarola afterwards exercised. In this latter case also he is the painter of the moment, and not merely one of the band of fellow-worshippers, Fra Bartolommeo, Michelangelo, Lorenzo di Credi, who were reconstructing the fabric of art for all future time. Botticelli's last pictures, *The Nativity* and *The Entombment*, show his own characteristics even as they convey reminiscences of other painters. Yet they form an isolated moment in the history of art, representing the tragedy of Savonarola, of the vain beating of a high imagination against the current of a work-a-day and sensuous world. The inscription which Botticelli himself set above his *Nativity* gives expression to the momentary character of his work: "This picture, I, Alessandro, painted at the end of the year 1500 in the turmoil of Italy in the half time after the time according to the eleventh chapter of St. John in the second arc of the Apocalypse, when the devil is let loose for three and a half years."

The painter outlived his art yet scarcely his reputation, for his fame as a draughtsman was still high when he was carried to Ognissanti, in 1510. This reputation, however, waned until its remarkable revival in England during the last quarter of a century. His present popularity may be accounted for by the application of the historical method to art criticism, by the fact that art has for the public acquired an educational, and not merely an epi-

curean value. From this process Botticelli has gained most, because no other painter so exactly represents an interesting historical moment. But there is more than this. An educated public, yet ignorant of technique, is soon satiated with technical perfection, with the unadulterated qualities of art. For such Botticelli not only paints a picture in bright harmonious colour and with an enchanting outline, but he tells a story, and what is better still only half tells it, leaving much to the imagination. A generation forced to live in towns yet loving country, seeking pleasure yet nervously depressed, finds a sympathetic chord in the freshness of Botticelli's Tuscan spring and in his melancholy half-consciousness of a decadent age and a short-lived phase of art with yearnings that know no satisfaction. Appetites now intellectual, now material, and always dainty, are stimulated by the delicate flavour of Lorenzo de' Medici's favourite painter, by the half concealment of the sensuous in the spiritual.

With Botticelli and Piero di Cosimo died for ever a school of secular imaginative art. In the future drawing, composition, colouring were to be incomparably finer, yet never again was there such poetic fancy. The spring was joyous, but it was shadowed by the melancholy consciousness of its shortness. The sense that life was being lived too quick brought reverie into the most youthful faces.

Of Filippino Lippi, Botticelli's most important pupil, we cannot here speak in detail. That he had the favour of Lorenzo seems certain. To him the Mæcenas entrusted the pious task of raising a mon-

FILIPPINO LIPPI.

Portrait by himself in the Uffizi Gallery.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

ment to the painter's father at Spoleto. Through is influence, no doubt, at the early age of twenty- ve Filippino received the commission, abandoned y Perugino, to complete the frescoes in the great all of the Signoria, while his pictures found their ay to the Court of Matthias Corvinus. Lorenzo, ioreover, recommended him to Cardinal Caraffa, ho in enthusiastic admiration declared that he ould not exchange the Florentine for any of the reeks. Filippino was no mere imitator, yet his est works are reminiscences either of Masaccio or is father, and are hardly characteristic of the Lau- ntian age. When he takes his master for his xample, he is apt to exaggerate his sense of move- ent, and his dramatic eccentricities, while missing ie grace which courts pardon for the faults; the ovement of the person becomes subordinate to ie fluttering of unnecessary furbelows. Yet it is nly in writing Lorenzo's life that the historian ould be justified in giving such scant notice to ilippino Lippi, whose picturesque qualities were ther those of the past, while his scientific methods oked to the coming future.

Piero di Cosimo, who derived his name from his aster, the careful, graceful, commonplace Cosimo osselli, cannot be so lightly treated. His contem- oraries dubbed him a solitary eccentric, moving tside their orbit, with fancies and methods which ere not their own. But in such characters the his- rian finds the quintessence of his study, the exag- ration or the abstraction of the tendencies of his e, the modes of thought of the moment uninflu-

enced by conventions which are behind, or by fashions which are before, their time. Piero stands nearest to Botticelli. These two painters have had imitators but no successors. With them died not a school but a mood of art, at once classical and contemporary, secular and spiritual. The fault has been laid at the door of Savonarola or of Science. The truth is that there was no fault to lay, but rather merit to ascribe. The typical feature of the age was individuality, and this will neither boast of parentage, nor recognise paternity.

Piero was at once fantastic and naturalistic, humorous and pathetic. His Madonnas and his nymphs are robust Tuscan girls, short and square with broad lines and wholesome flesh. To the present day at critical agricultural moments they may be seen in their hundreds, no plainer and no prettier. But they are brought into pathetic situations, sometimes because so entirely natural, as in the Nativity, at others because so completely impossible as in the death of Procris, or of Hylas. It would be rash to class Piero as a conscious Neo-Platonist or professed Pythagorean. Nevertheless it is obvious that for him godhead and manhood, plant and animal life are mere gradations. The figure which in the National Gallery kneels at the head of the dead Procris tells more than all the pages of Hawthorne's *Transformation*. At the picture of Hylas recently shown in the Italian Exhibition the spectator is in doubt whether he should laugh or cry. The more conscientiously anatomical is a school of painting, the greater is the difficulty of representing limpness

Yet Piero dared to paint the exhausted, half-drowned Hylas, propped against the well. Of the nymphs one is naïvely triumphant at her conquest, another eagerly sympathetic, while a third drops her basket of flowers and holds her hands upon her knees in awkward, rustic mirth. All bear the gifts which they love best to bring Hylas back to life. Any who did not know that it was the choicest offering which Piero himself could make, might smile at the fluffy white Bolognese dog which one of the nymphs is carrying to console her love.

Piero's weird fancy delighted in the invention of imaginary beasts and flowers, his close study of nature giving a life-like reality to these creations, making them appear rather developments than monstrosities. Neatness was his abhorrence, no broom must come near his studio, no vine, no plant in his garden must be pruned or trimmed, for nature was the only true gardener. Passionately devoted to his art he would spare no time nor trouble to master a difficult effect, eating little but hard-boiled eggs, which he boiled fifty at a time, when he heated the water for his size. Learning the secrets of oil from Leonardo, he devoted his life to experiments in the new medium, and in the reflection and concentration of light. Nervous almost to hysteria Piero could not bear the sound of crying children, chanting friars, church bells, and coughing men; terrified at lightning he would crouch in a corner wrapped in his mantle till the storm had passed. In extreme old age he would piteously strive to make his palsied fingers hold the brushes which fell to the

ground while he abused his hands. He would fly into passions with the flies or the shadows on the wall, and at the very idea of doctors, medicines, nurses, and weeping friends. Thus dead at the bottom of his stairs one day was found the genius who, as Vasari writes, passed for a madman, whereas had he been less unpractical he might have been adored. Nevertheless Piero had his day of fashion. None could invent like he such strange fantastic carnival cars, nor adorn a dowry chest or the panelling of a room with such gay companies of satyr, faun, and mænad.

The personal relations of Ghirlandaio (Domenico Bigordi) to Lorenzo were not so close as those of Botticelli. He was not the thriftless unpractical artist who needed aid and guidance, but a hard-working man of business, who refused no order which came to his doors, who would paint with his own hand the hoops of market-women's baskets. Some commissions, indeed, he did execute for Lorenzo, painting a Vulcan for the villa at Spedaletto and a sacred subject for the abbey outside Volterra which had been conferred upon Giovanni. Lorenzo's influence, moreover, was supreme on the Boards of Works for the Signoria and the Cathedral. For the former Ghirlandaio painted the frescoes in the Hall of Audience, which still exist, while to him and the miniaturist Gherardo Lorenzo confided the execution of his darling design of creating a school of mosaic. His employer's death prevented the execution of the mosaics in the chapel of S. Zenobio, but *The Annunciation* over the north door of the

Cathedral is attributed to Ghirlandaio. He threw himself warmly into his patron's scheme, describing mosaic as the painting for eternity. Apart from this, Ghirlandaio worked mainly for members of the more intimate Medicean circle, especially for the Tornabuoni, both at Rome and Florence, and for the Lyons bankers, the Sassetti. One of his most admirable portraits is of Francesco Sassetti, whose letters to Lorenzo have been already quoted, with his little bright-faced son.

If there was a Laurentian age in art, it was only natural that Ghirlandaio should show its impress. Born in 1449 and dying in January, 1494, his life was almost conterminous with Lorenzo's. His work illustrates to the full the secular and realistic tendencies of the age. With the exception, indeed, of portraits he painted little but religious subjects, yet it is this very fact which emphasises his peculiar proclivities. The Bible story is with him but the frame for the *genre* picture of fifteenth-century Florence. It has been most ridiculously said that he was the first painter to introduce portraits into religious scenes. It may, however, with truth be suggested that he was the earliest Italian artist who was in the first place a portrait painter. The anecdote related of his early years bears this suggestion out. Ghirlandaio was a goldsmith by profession, working at the votive offerings and the silver garlands for young girls, by which his father got his livelihood and his name. In most cases the goldsmith's work was the introduction to that of the architect, the sculptor, or the painter to which it logically led. With Ghir-

landaio this was otherwise; in his painting there is little trace of the goldsmith. As a small and, perhaps, fanciful illustration of this it may be noticed that he is stated to have been the first to replace the use of embossed metal ornament in his pictures by that of colour. At all events the story may well be true that he neglected his goldsmith's work to sit at the shop window, and draw the portraits of the passers-by.

Ghirlandaio's main interest lay unquestionably in the present; that to him was the subject best worth painting, and but for some slight and mechanical deduction for his classical studies, he painted it with the fidelity of a photograph. For this reason he has been called the most characteristic painter of the age which lies between Masaccio and Michelangelo; he is material, realistic to the last degree, he is absolutely without ideal or type, he painted precisely the Florentine men and women whom he saw, and some may think them none the less beautiful for being real. The serious grace of Ghirlandaio's studies might well enable him to dispense with types. His chief works in Florence are the Sassetti and Tornabuoni Chapels in Santa Trinità and Santa Maria Novella, respectively. In the former the subject is the life of St. Francis, but the interest consists in the portraits of the bystanders, of Maso degli Albizzi, Agnolo Acciaiuolo, and Palla Strozzi belonging to an older generation, and of Lorenzo de' Medici himself. Vasari truly points out the realism in the group of friars who weep round St. Francis' body. The bishop, he writes, with spectacles on his nose

singing the vigil, is so life-like that, but for not hearing his voice, none would believe him to be painted.

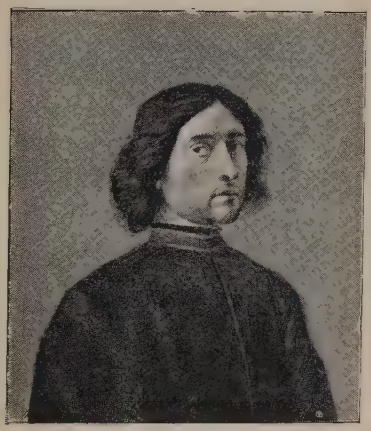
The frescoes of Santa Maria Novella are a portrait gallery in themselves. They profess to represent the lives of the Virgin and St. John the Baptist, but really portray the life of the Tornabuoni household, its births, its weddings, its worship, and its banquets. We see the parents, the young son Lorenzo with his beautiful bride Francesca degli Albizzi, the relations, and the banking partners. In one group stand the four Humanists, Ficino, Landino, Politian, and Gentile Becchi, in another the artist, his brother, his master, and his pupil.

If at Florence Ghirlandaio has glorified high life, at San Gemignano, he has immortalised a humbler sphere. Here is the plain parlour where Santa Fina lies dying, with its long kitchen table, the brass plate, the decanter covered by its glass, the wooden platter, with two pomegranates. By the girl watch two peasant women in laced bodices and white snoods, the window looks out over cliff and stream, while through the open door is seen the little garden with its rose tree. Infinitely realistic and pathetic is Santa Fina's death-bed, the mother with her hand upon the saint's, which Santa Fina covers with the other, the grave, sympathetic face of the priest who reads, the pathos of the little chorister who kisses her feet. On one side are three old men in conversation, on the other three youths holding each other by the arm. One chorister is intent upon his heavy cross, another smiles at his anxiety, while two of the

acolytes with coarse faces and thick lips may be see
in every church of the Italy of to-day.

Ghirlandaio revelled in the splendour of his age, i
processions of nobles on horseback, in the jewelle
robes of priests, in marble seats and columns, fin
glass and linen, in Oriental carpets, and braze
vessels. He sets his *Last Supper* in a stately garde
with the table backed by bay and ilex, orange an
pomegranate, over which fly bright plumaged birds
while peacocks pose on marble coigns of vantage.

It is not only in the general treatment of his su
ject that the artist exhibits his realism. Fe
painters have surpassed him in his portrayal of th
surface of the face and hands, of the effect of ag
upon the texture of the skin, and of its relation t
hair and veins. It is well worth while to study i
his *Nativity* at the Academy the group of shepherds
the shine on the tight-drawn skin of the forehead
the close grey hair, the unshaven chin, the veins an
wrinkles on hands and wrists, the texture of th
lamb's-wool cap. A remarkable example of his lov
of detail is the *St. Jerome* in Ognissanti. Here th
elaborate painting of table-cloth and writing-desk, o
scissors, inkpot, paper-knife, and guttering candle
of hour-glass, water flask, and medicine jar woul
seem to prove that the artist, prone by nature as h
was to realism, derived his scientific finish from th
Netherland School, whose pictures were well know
in the Medicean circle. This single figure is i
strong contrast to the free treatment of the large
subjects. Ghirlandaio's favourite medium for alta
pieces was tempera, but this, as with Melozzo d



DOMENICO GHIRLANDAIO.

Detail from the *Adoration of the Magi* by himself, in the Chapel of the Innocenti at Florence.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

Forlì, is here made to do the work of oil, not indeed of the fluid medium of later days, but of the glutinous resinous substance of the old German school.

Connected with his love of the actual are Ghirlandaio's skill in architectural detail, and his knowledge of linear perspective. His eye, says Vasari, was so true that he never measured and had never to correct. This certainty of eye was invaluable in his favourite task of covering large spaces with well-proportioned groups; he could paint rapidly, and never check the freedom of his handling. "I wish," he would say, "I had a contract to paint the whole circle of the walls of Florence." Notwithstanding his skill in dealing with spaces, like most of his contemporaries, he could not compare with later painters in scientific composition. His *Last Suppers*, for instance, in this respect contrast with Leonardo's great picture. This arose partly, no doubt, from his love for portraits; he must isolate his chief figures or chief groups, as in the Tornabuoni frescoes he must keep distinct the leading members of the house, the artistic group, and the literary quartette; the outline suffers from the needs of individual representation.

Ghirlandaio's classicism is, as usual, said to date from his visits to Rome where he painted in the Sistine Chapel. Henceforth his pictures are full of classical details, the reminiscences of his antiquarian studies. In *The Nativity*, for instance, already mentioned, the manger is a sarcophagus with a Roman inscription and fillet, while a Corinthian

column supports the shed, and the procession of kings rides through a Roman arch. Everything in fact that is of interest to the age is a fitting subject for his brush, and thus he is not the æsthete's nor the sentimentalist's painter, but the historian's; his pictures are a document. Ghirlandaio may be called in more respects than one the Giotto of the fifteenth century. He had not the naïve religious feeling of the earlier painter, just as he lacked the force and the idealism of his own great pupil Michelangelo; but in compensation he embodies the pathos of every-day life. His touches of affection or of sorrow are as real as the glass, the table-cloth, or the cat which give the material finish to his large coloured surfaces. He did not attempt, or failed, to reach dramatic expression or stirring emotion, in fact he never seemed to be striving for effects, he simply registered the sun or shadow of the passing day.

It was this sympathy, perhaps, which won for the industrious workman the devotion of his associates and caused the genuine grief at his untimely death. His brother David carried his worship to excess. Indignant with the monks of Passignano for the poor fare with which they regaled the artist, he threw the soup in the serving brother's face, broke his head with a roll, and drove the remonstrating abbot from his presence, shouting that Domenico was worth more than all the pigs of abbots who had ever ruled the monastery. Henceforth Domenico was treated as became the merits of the great materialist.

Building at Florence had run a course strangely different from that of the other arts. Here classicism

was supreme. The Tuscan architects aimed at the severest, most logical simplicity; they regarded their art as a problem in mathematics and mechanics; beauty, they thought must be the necessary consequence of the proportion of the simplest lines which could effectively span space and support weight. Thus projections, external statuary, all that tended to conceal the lines of the shell had almost disappeared, and it is this flatness of surface which displeases the untutored Northern eye in the works of the great Florentine architects. Brunelleschi's methods were continued by Michelozzo and Alberti, though with much individuality in the latter case, down to Lorenzo's accession. In particular the Dome of the Cathedral, itself drawn from the Pantheon, was the model for hundreds of humbler churches. Most frequently, as at Rimini, the architect had to deal with an earlier shell, and could therefore only display his taste in the erection of a cupola or the modification of the façade, but, wherever he had a free hand classical models were adapted with extraordinary ingenuity.

Private dwelling-houses had, indeed, retained at Florence something of their mediæval character, or rather the old Etruscan wall with its rough-hewn blocks, termed "opus rusticum," had lived through the middle ages to witness a classical revival. The Palazzo Pubblico served as a model for the palaces of the citizens, which therefore even in the fifteenth century retained the appearance of a defensive character. The rough stone gave a certain play of light and shade, but there was little ornament and no pro-

jection, save what was obtained by flat bands or string-courses, marking the several stories, by cornices, or by projecting eaves. Art displayed itself in proportion, in the spacing of windows and doors, and in very delicate decoration of lintels, window arches, and friezes. Alberti had, however, in the Palazzo Rucellai produced a lighter, more domestic style, by the introduction of pilasters between the windows, which hereafter might have great consequence. The interior of the palace was a court surrounded by a deep colonnade. Above there was frequently an open balcony or "loggia," while at the back, overlooking the garden, was a much wider balcony, a delightful sun-trap, wherein a large share of social life was passed.

Brunelleschi and Michelozzo had built so much, especially for the Medici, that no great work was left for the Laurentian age to do in Florence, though the building trade was in Lorenzo's later days peculiarly brisk. His favourite architect was Giuliano Giamberti, whom he nicknamed San Gallo, in honour of the convent which he built for Fra Mariano. The father had been closely attached to Cosimo and Piero as master carpenter and wood carver, and to him was entrusted after Giuliano de' Medici's murder the care of his infant son. The young Giamberti early went to Rome in the service of Paul II., and here began the collection of drawings which is the most valuable authority for the condition of ancient buildings at that date. He was an enthusiastic student of antiquity, travelling to South Italy and to France in search of monuments, and becoming

the intimate friend of the rulers of Naples and Milan and of Giuliano della Rovere. Under Sixtus IV. he returned to Florence and was Lorenzo's close associate until the latter's death. Besides the convent of San Gallo, now destroyed, he built the octagonal sacristy of Santo Spirito, and the cloister of Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi. More celebrated is Lorenzo's favourite villa at Poggio a Caiano, that plain and comfortable country house, which to all appearance might have been built in the last half century. The sole ornament of the exterior is the classical portico, while the pride of the villa is the hall with its beautiful barrel roof, a feat which Lorenzo believed impossible until the architect convinced him by building a similar ceiling for his own house in Florence.

San Gallo's characteristics are extreme simplicity and grace, the delicate introduction of colour by means of glazed tiles, of alternation of black and white marble, and of blue and white Robbia work. His little Church of the Madonna delle Carceri at Prato is perhaps the gem of the Laurentian age of architecture. It is a model of the rational employment of space for purposes of worship, and it is difficult to conceive that any interior so simple could possess such fascination. Classical principles have never been employed with more sympathy and more originality.

Lorenzo continually employed his architect on fortification. In the war of 1478 he strengthened Castellina, and conducted the defence, for he was, as Lorenzo said, the only man who understood artillery. After the peace he was engaged on the

fortifications of Ostia by Giuliano della Rovere, and then for Lorenzo elaborated plans for the defence of Sarzana and Poggio Imperiale. Captured by the Pisans during their revolt from Florence, he had his revenge by building the bridge which sealed the Arno, and, after the town's capitulation, the fortress which bridled its liberty. Giuliano della Rovere as Julius II., and Lorenzo's son as Leo X., continued to show favour to San Gallo and his brother Antonio, and the former worked with Raphael at St. Peter's, where he had laboured nearly half a century before.

Benedetto and Giuliano da Maiano were originally artists in *intarsia*, and then graduated in sculpture and architecture. Giuliano found his way to Naples and died in Ferrante's service. Benedetto, after working in many parts of Italy and personally taking specimens of his *intarsia* to Matthias Corvinus, received a commission for the greatest work of Lorenzo's age, the Palazzo Strozzi. This is indeed the closing architectural feat of the fifteenth century. Neither Benedetto nor his employer, Filippo Strozzi, lived to see it finished. Filippo in his will begged that Lorenzo de' Medici, and, in case of his death, the Art of Calimala would superintend its completion; if this were delayed after 1496, they should have in reward a good dinner in the palace every year at the charge of the estate. Its second architect was Simone Pollaiuolo, called Cronaca from his endless yarns upon Savonarola, whom he worshipped. To him the new Republic gave the task of constructing the great hall in the Palazzo Pubblico for the Grand Council of some 3000 members. The inimit-

able iron-work of the Strozzi palace, its lanterns and its torch-holders, were the work of Niccolò Grosso, an eccentric genius whom Lorenzo christened Caparra, because he would never work without a payment in advance (arra). Lorenzo once visited his shop in person to beg him to undertake some iron-work to send abroad. The independent smith was working for poor folk; he said he must finish their orders first, for he had got their money which he liked as well as Lorenzo's. A good Christian, he would never work for Jews, nor could any offers tempt him to leave his beloved Florence. The building of the palace dragged on until 1533, long after Cronaca's death. Speaking roughly, the design of the exterior is Benedetto's, except the cornice which, with the court, is the work of Cronaca.

Art did not so fully occupy Lorenzo's sense of beauty but that there was place for music. To this he was passionately attached, as became a neo-Platonist. Not only would Ficino and Baccio Ugolino bring their lyres, but the very servants were enlisted in the houshold choir, while the master's harsh voice did not deter him from taking his part. Through him musicians, as well as painters, found employment; with Leonardo da Vinci he sent into Ludovico Moro's service a skilful player on the flute. Five organs, great or small, were among the treasures of his house.

As yet, however, there was no renowned school of Italian music. Composers there were of course; Lorenzo, before Piero's death, sent through the organist, Squarcialupi, one of his songs to be set to

music by a Canon of Cermenate. But Italy was behind the barbarian in this respect, and the great masters of the Belgian school found a welcome in the land which could appreciate but not create. The greatest of these, Josquin des Près of Hainault, was long at Rome under Sixtus IV., and visited Florence once, if not twice, during Lorenzo's rule, while Agricola and Obrecht, who taught Erasmus, were likewise guests. But the composer who has the closest connection with this biography is the Bohemian, Heinrich Isaak. He is said to have been sent on a diplomatic mission by Maximilian, whose Court composer he afterwards became. For several years he was in Lorenzo's service and society, setting to music his drama of *San Giovanni and San Paolo*, the ballads, and the part songs for the Carnival, throwing himself into the gay secular life of the city, which he himself sang as "la più bella, la più degna."

This secularism gives Isaak his importance for the present purpose. The Netherland composers were exclusively religious. Isaak, alone of the great masters of his age, devoted himself to giving melody to the songs of the people, whether German or Italian, among whom his tunes are still said to linger. The popular character of his music has been attributed to his Bohemian birth, as being the outcome of Slavonic peasant life. It is also fully possible that it was the result of his long residence in Florence. At any rate either Lorenzo found in him the musician through whom his own love for popular poetry could find expression, or else he impressed this love upon the composer, turning him from the trodden high

ANTONIO SQUARCIALUPI, THE ORGANIST.

Portrait bust by Benedetto da Maiano in the Cathedral at Florence.

(*From a photograph by Alinari.*)

way of religious music. In either case Lorenzo's influence upon contemporary song was decisive. Nor did it die with him. It seems unquestionable that Savonarola borrowed Isaak's melodies for his hymns, for the devil must not have all the best tunes. Isaak, too, perhaps in person, certainly through his pupil Senfel and his follower Walther, determined the character of the Lutheran liturgy which should, above all things, appeal to the people. Thus music seems to unite the ages even more closely than art or letters, and both Luther and Erasmus find a point of contact with the Florence of Lorenzo.*

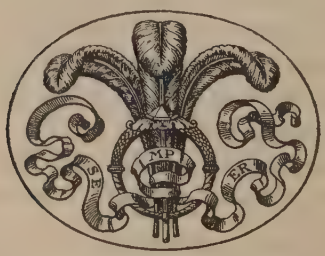
If Florence looked abroad for her composer, she could boast of a magnificent executionist. The organist, Antonio Squarcialupi, came from the Elsa Valley. Strangers, writes Landino, would journey from England and the farthest North to hear him play, while the travel-tossed Leo Battista Alberti describes the calming of his nerves, as the music swelled along the Cathedral aisles. To Squarcialupi's choir the best singers were sent from distant Italian churches, whilst nobles and professionals would visit Florence to learn from him the art of organ playing and of organ building. Even from Hungary, Matthias Corvinus sent a priest to study under the organist of whose fame his Neapolitan wife had doubtless told him.

When Squarcialupi died the state decreed a monument in its Cathedral to him "whose hand had

* Machiavelli was not improbably a pupil of Isaak. On his embassy to Germany he visited the composer, who, he says, had a wife at Florence. *O Tommasini La Vita di N Machiavelli*, pp. 101–401.

whiled mortals to sweet wonderment." To Lorenzo himself is attributed the epitaph which was judged far superior to those of Politian, Ficino, and others who competed for the pious privilege. It was due to him also that Giotto's bust has found a niche in the great Tuscan temple. Florence has not repaid this generous recognition to Lorenzo. After four hundred years she might well lay the ghost, if such there be, of political antipathy, to honour with a fitting monument the most national, the most gifted representative of that many-sided culture for which the city of the Arno is still famous. With or without her wish the fame of the Medici will for ever be linked with hers. In Lorenzo's own words, "The house goes with the State." History, at least, will keep green the Laurel of whom Politian sang:

> "The Laurel in whose honour throng
> Muses and nymphs with dance and song,
> Beneath whose sheltering leaves the lyre
> Sounds softer, and more sweet the choir,
> Whose fall hath closed the ears that hear
> And voiceless left the vocal sphere."



Device of Lorenzo de' Medici.

Medici.

Florence.

INDEX.

A

Acciajuoli, Agnolo, 47, 59, 63, 70; Donato, 70, 144, 145; Jacopo, 56, 64
Accoppiatori, 30, 33, 92, 236, 251
Achmed, Keduk, 179, 182
Adorni, House of, 153, 210
Adorno, Prospero, 154
Agricola, 439
Alberti, Leo Battista, 393, 395, 435, 441
Albertinelli, 394
Albizzi, House of, 12–17, 332; Luca, 332; Maso, 12; Rinaldo, 12–16, 332
Alfonso, Duke of Calabria—Marriage, 53; residence at Florence, 71; character, 102; friendship with Lorenzo, 102; hostility to Lorenzo, 147; unpopularity at Florence, 203, 204; military career, 66, 151, 158, 167, 178, 188, 221; death, 308
Alfonso, King of Naples, 37, 40
Ambrogini, Angelo, *see* Politian
Andronicus, 387
Angelico, Fra, 391, 392, 399
Anghiari, Baldaccio da, 31
Anjou, House of, 206, 207
Anne of Beaujeu, 206, 230, 232, 236, 264
Anne of Brittany, 229
Antonio, Giovanni, 398
Appiano, Jacopo d', 157, 162
Ardinghelli, Niccolò, 88
Aretino, Leonardo, *see* Bruni
Argenta, battle of, 193
Argyropulos, 325, 333
Arts, the greater, 7, 10, 22, 25, 28, 97, 240; the lesser, 6, 9–11, 22, 25, 28, 97, 238, 240
Ascoli, Revolt of, 221
Asti, 40, 193
Attavante, 396
Aurispa, 325, 326, 334

B

Baglioni, House of, 219
Bagnolo, Peace of, 194
Bagnone, Stefano da, 127
Bajazet, 182, 232
Baldovinetti, Mariotto, 248
Balducci, Francesco, 248
Balia, 16, 29, 30, 93, 236, 245, 251
Balue, Cardinal la, 205, 212
Barbo, Cardinal, 200
Bargello del Contado, 96
Baroncelli, Bernardo, 127, 130, 136, 180
Bartolommeo, Fra, 394, 416, 423
Basche, Peron de, 230
Becchi, Gentile, 45, 79, 81
Belcari, Feo, 331
Benivieni, 304, 349

Bentivoglio, House of, 3; Francesco, 218; Giovanni, 54, 140, 162, 218
Bergamo, 192, 193
Bertoldo, 399, 401
Bessarion, 325
Bibbiena Piero da, 285
Bigordi, Domenico, *see* Ghirlandaio
Biondo, Flavio, 334
Bologna, 3, 218
Borgia, Cardinal, 200, 205
Borgo San Sepolcro, 18
Borromeo, Giovanni, 123
Borse, the, 28
Botticelli, Sandro, 304, 394, 396, 397, 400, 407, 409–424
Bracciolini, Jacopo, 128, 133: Poggio, 128, 326, 329, 333, 334
Brescia, 192, 193
Brunelleschi, 392, 435
Bruni, Leonardo, 328, 330
Buonarroti, Ludovico, 402
Buongirolami, Bernardo, 93
Buonuomini, the Twelve, 24

C

Calabria, Duchess of, 53, 71, 102, 103; Duke of, *see* Alfonso
Cambi, Nero, 251
Campo Morto, Battle of, 188
Capitano del Popolo, 24, 26
Capponi, Neri, 31; Piero, 154
Carafa, Diomede, 173
Carniola, Archbishop of, 189, 190
Casole, 156
Castagno, Andrea del, 392
Catasto, 31, 257
Catanei, Simonetta, 367, 409
Cavalcanti, the 139
Cennini, Bernardo, 366
Cervia, 192, 194, 195
Chalcondylas, Demetrius, 387
Charles VIII., 206, 229
Christophsen, Pieter, 403
Chrysolaras, 324, 332
Ciriaco, 325
Citerna, 188, 196
Città di Castello, 116, 187
Colle, Siege of, 157, 158
Colleone, Bartolommeo, 65
Colleonic War, 66–70
Comines, Philippe de, 146, 164, 231
Consoli del Mare, 250
Corsi, Bardo, 91, 236
Corsini, Piero, 136
Corvinus Matthias, 183, 403, 425, 441
Council of the Commune, 24; of the Hundred, 25, 33, 91, 92, 236, 245; of the Hundred and Thirty-one, 25; of the People, 24; of the Seventy, 237, 239, *et seq.*; of the Two Hundred, 25; of the Two Hundred and Ten, 237–239
Credi, Lorenzo di, 394, 408, 409, 423
Cremona, Diet at, 191
Cronaca, *see* Pollaiuolo
Cybò, Cardinal, 200; Franceschetto, 213

D

Desiderio, 392
Djem, 182, 232
Donatello, 392, 397, 404, 405
Donati, Lucrezia, 73
Dovadola, battle of, 69
Dowry Fund, 268, 270, 272

E

Eight of Pratica, 243; of Watch and Ward, 26, 95, 244
Election, Mode of, 28
Este, House of, 184; Beatrice d', 229; Borso d', 54, 57, 66, 70, 331; Ercole d', 57, 66, 152, 153, 156

F

Fabriano, Gentile da, 399
Ferrantino of Naples, 173
Ferrara, 184, 191; Marquis and Duke of, *see* Este; war of, 186–188, 194, 196

Ficarolo, 188
Ficino, Marsilio, 333, 337–343, 387, 439
Fieschi, House of, 69; Gian Luigi, 209; Obietto, 209
Fiesole, Mino da, 392
Filelfo, 329, 332, 334, 387
Florence, *passim*
Forlì, 41, 183, 184, 215–217
Fortebraccio, Carlo, 120, 155, 156
Francesca, Piero della, 397, 402
Franco, Matteo, 338, 350
Franzesi, Napoleone, 128, 136
Frederick III., the Emperor, 37, 168, 227
Fregosi, House of, 153, 175, 210
Fregoso, Ludovico di Campo, 71; Ludovico, Doge of Genoa, 153; Paolo, Doge of Genoa, 210
Frescobaldi, Baltista, 248

G

Genazzano, Fra Mariano da, 303
Genoa, rebellions against Milan, 119, 153; attitude in Ferrarese war, 187; overtures to Venice, 210
George of Trebizond, 325, 328
Gerace, Marquis of, 229
Gherardo, 396
Ghiberti, 392
Ghirlandaio, 396, 399, 400, 410, 417, 418, 428–434
Giamberti, Giuliano da, *see* San Gallo
Gianfigliazzi, Bongianni, 135, 191, 199
Ginori, Giorgio, 109
Giustini, House of, 116
Giustino, Lorenzo, 124, 128, 166
Giustiniani, 331
Gonfalonier of Justice, 24
Gonfaloniers of Companies, 24
Gonzaga, Ridolfi, 155
Gozzoli, Benozzo, 391, 392, 399
Granacci, 401
Grosso, Niccolò, 439
Guarino, 332, 334
Guicciardini, Francesco, 306, 307; Jacopo, 107, 152, 199; Luigi, 94, 119, 152, 180
Guilds, System of, 6, 9, 10, 22
Guzzoni, Boccalino dei, 211

I

Imola, 115, 183, 216
Inpruneta, 176
Income tax, *see* Taxes
Innocent VIII., 201, 207, 209, 220, 221
Isaak, Heinrich, 440

J

Josquin des Près, 440, 441

L

Ladislas of Naples, 12
Lampugnani, 118, 119
Landino, Cristoforo, 333, 337, 343–345, 349, 387
Landucci, 165
Lanfredini, House of, 221; Giovanni, 106
Lascaris, 325, 366, 387
Lazaro, 309
Leghorn, 17
Leone, Pier, 314
Lioni, Ruberto, 62
Lippi, Filippino, 396, 421, 424, 425; Filippo, 392, 396, 404, 412
Lorraine, Duke of, 192
Lotti, Luigi, 398
Louis XI., 56, 69, 146, 168, 192
Lucca, 13, 41, 79, 80, 154, 198

M

Machiavelli, 306, 307
Maffei, Antonio, 127
Maiano, Benedetto da, 393, 438; Giuliano da, 399, 400, 438
Malatesta, Pandolfo, 189; Ruberto, 71, 156, 162, 166, 167, 187, 188; Sigismondo, 71, 338

Malpaga, 65
Manetti, 329, 332, 333
Manfredi, House of, 162, 187; Astorre, 68, 217; Galeotto, 218; Taddeo, 115
Mantegna, Andrea, 402
Mantua, Marquis of, 192
Marciano, Antonio da, 199
Marullus, 362
Marsigli, 332
Marsuppini, 333
Masaccio, 391, 392
Maximilian of Germany, 168, 227, 230
Medici, House of, 1, 2; their banks, 19; foreign policy, 52, 84; marriages, 76; patronage of art, 20; popularity, 15, 17; Bianca de', *see* Pazzi, Bianca; Carlo, 15; Contessina, 294; Cosimo, 15; exile, 16; despotism, 23; constitutional changes, 33, 34; character, 35; foreign policy, 36, 39, 40; patronage of art and literature, 333, 394; Giovanni (Cosimo's father), 15; Giovanni (Cosimo's son), 34, 216, 219, 232; Giovanni (Lorenzo's son), 294, 296, 300, 321; Giuliano, personal appearance, 46; tournament, 99; popularity, 125; plot against, 127, 128; murder, 130; funeral, 142; character, 143, 294; Lorenzo, birth, 1; education, 44, 45; visit to Rome, 35; beginning of public career, 43; mission to Milan, 53, 54; mission to Naples, 56; tournament, 73, 74; marriage, 75; early measures, 90–99; attempt on Piombino, 108; mission to Rome, 108; plots to assassinate, 131, 248; war with Naples and the Pope, 144–181; second mission to Naples, 170, 176; mission to Cremona, 192; position after Ferrarese War, 196; visit to Pietra Santa, 199; recovers Sarzana, 210; death, 231, 308, 312; funeral, 312; character, 290–292, 300, 301, 321; civil and criminal jurisdiction, 274 *et seq.*; constitutional changes, 236 *et seq.*; dependence on party support, 271 *et seq.*; despotic power, 251, 279 *et seq.*; diplomatic ability, 221, 222; financial difficulties, 269, 270; financial measures, 253 *et seq.*; importance of foreign relations, 101; influence on art, 390 *et seq.*; influence on education, 386, 387; influence on literature, 336, 385–389; influence on music, 439; military weakness, 160, 235; personal appearance, 46; poems, etc., 363 *et seq.*; popularity, 301; relations with Egypt, 232; relations with France, 146, 223 *et seq.*; relations with Germany, 227; relations with Milan, 53, 79, 106, 108, 117, 193, 196; relations with Naples, 106, 120, 144, 176, 197, 198, 205, 220, 225, 226; relations with Popes, 114 *et seq.*, 144–181, 190, 201, 213, 220, 223, 232; relations with smaller Italian states, 109, 113, 116, 189, 197, 212, 216, 218; relations with Turks, 232; relations with Venice, 106, 113, 117, 120, 223; religious beliefs, 302, 305; social leadership, 99; tastes, 45, 88, 283, 290, 335; Lucrezia (Lorenzo's mother, *see* Tornabuoni, Lucrezia); Lucrezia (Lorenzo's daughter, *see* Salviati, Lucrezia); Luisa, 294; Nannina, (*see* Rucellai, Nannina); Pier Francesco, 95; Piero (Lorenzo's father), succession to power, 47; unpopularity, 49; foreign relations, 53, 55, 85; plot against, 57; death, 82; Piero (Lorenzo's son), child-

hood, 294; mission to Rome, 201; marriage, 214, 229; succession to power, 361; death, 308; character, 321; Salvestro, 14; Viero, 15
Memling, 403
Mercanzia, the, 27, 96
Merula, 361
Michelangelo, 304, 393, 401, 402, 423
Michelozzi, 392, 435, 436
Milan, *see* Sforza *and* Visconti
Mirandola, Pico della, 309, 338, 345, 375
Mocenigo, Doge of Venice, 185
Molinella (la), Battle of, 69
Montano, Cola, 118, 250
Montefeltro, Federigo da, *see* Urbino
Montesecco, Gian Battista da, 124, 127, 135; confession of, 146, 147
Montorio, Count of, 202
Morelli, Girolamo, 155
Mountain and Plain, Parties of, 49

N

Naples *see* Alfonso, Federigo, *and* Ferrante
Nardi, Bernardo, 109
Nero, Bernardo del, 93
Neroni, Diotisalvi, 48, 49, 53, 59 *et seq.*
Niccoli, Niccolò, 334
Niccolini, Agnolo, 93
Nori, Francesco, 131

O

Obrecht, 439
Oddi, 219
Olgiati, 118, 119
Ordelaffi, House of, 162, 183, 187; Antoniello, 183, 184
Orleans, Duke of, 37, 56
Orsi, Cecco, 215; Lorenzo, 215
Orsini, House of, 75, 76; Alfonsina, 214; Clarice, 73, 75, 77, 292, 296; Latino, 76; Niccolò, Count of Pitigliano, 152, 162, 204, 219; Paolo, 219; Rinaldo, 116; Virginio, 162, 204, 219
Osimo, Rebellion of, 211, 212
Otranto, 180, 182, 183

P

Palmieri, Matteo, 94, 411
Pandolfini, Agnolo, 333; Pier Filippo, 93, 221, 277, 304
Parlamento, 29
Paul II., 53, 56, 70, 107
Pazzi, Conspiracy, 121 *et seq.*; House of, 46, 121, 122, 136, 137, 177; Alessandra, 122; Bianca, 46, 122, 308; Francesco, 123, 125; Guglielmo, 46, 53, 125, 131, 137; Jacopo, 125, 133, 134, 138; Piero, 121, 122; Renato, 125, 135
Perault, Raymond, 227
Perugino, 400, 401, 407
Petrucci, 132, 133
Piancaldoli, 217
Piccinino, 54
Pico, Galeotto, 152
Piero di Cosimo, 393, 394, 396, 424–428
Pietra Santa, 80, 82, 199
Piombino, 107, 108
Pisa, 17, 386
Pistoja, 17
Pitti, Luca, 31–34, 48, 59, 61, 64
Pius II., 52
Podestà, 24, 26, 96
Poggio Imperiale, 152, 156
Pollaiuoli, the, 392, 394, 397, 438
Politian, 131, 295, 308, 334, 338, 355–363
Pontano, 207, 324
Pontremoli, 80
Pratica, 26

Prato, 17, 109
Prato Vecchio, Ser Giovanni da, 285
Printing in Florence, 366, 388
Priors, 24, 33
Pucci, House of, 22; Antonio, 93, 174, 199
Pulci, Luca, 351; Luigi, 338, 350–355

R

Rapazzo, Lorenzo da, 277
Ravenna, 192, 194, 195
René, King, 155, 178, 205, 206
Riario, Girolamo, 105, 116, 123, 124, 174, 183, 184, 188, 189, 201, 214, 215; Pietro, 104, 115; Rafaello, 104, 134, 144
Ricasoli, House of, 139, 161
Ridolfi, Pier, 294
Riformagioni, 25
Rimini, 41, 71, 72, 189
Rinuccini, Alamanno, 141, 274
Robbia, Luca della, 392, 395
Rosselli, Cosimo, 396, 425
Rossellino, 392
Rossi, 332
Rovere, Giovanni della, 105; Giuliano, 105, 190, 200, 201, 212, 398, 438; Leonardo, 105
Rucellai, House of, 46, 291; Bernardo, 46, 385; Camilla, 349; Nannina, 46, 354, 375

S

Salutati, 332
Saluzzo, Marquis of, 152
Salviati, Francesco, 116, 124, 132, 133; Jacopo, 294; Lucrezia, 294, 351
San Gallo, Giuliano da, 393, 397, 436, 437
Sannazzaro, 362
San Savino, Siege of, 153
San Severino, Ruberto, 66, 119, 153, 159, 188, 193, 203–205, 208
Sansoni, Rafaello, 127
Sarzana, 71, 80, 82, 175, 194, 198, 208–210; Tommaso da, 332
Sarzanella, 71, 81, 198, 209
Sassetti, 230
Savonarola, 97, 284, 303, 305, 311, 312
Savoy, Bona of, 105, 119; Duke of, 37, 69, 187
Scala, Alessandra, 292; Bartolommeo, 174, 187, 362
Scrutiny, 28
Senfel, 441
Sforza, Alessandro, 72; Ascanio, 104, 119, 201; Caterina, 105, 215, 216; Costanzo, 156, 157, 159, 162, 166, 187, 192; Francesco, 37, 39, 54, 55; Galeazzo Maria—attacks the Duke of Bourbon, 55; character, 103; relations with Lorenzo, 108; murder, 118, 308; Giovanni Galeazzo, 81, 214, 229, 308; Ippolita Maria, *see* Calabria, Duchess of; Ludovico Moro—character, 104; exile, 119; entry into Milan, 159; military successes, 159, 210; part in Ferrarese War, 186; marriage, 229; relations with Germany, 230; relations with Lorenzo, 186, 192, 194, 209; relations with Naples, 229, 231; treaty with France, 230; imprisonment, 308; Ottaviano, 119, 216
Siena, 40, 120, 150, 178, 187, 197, 198
Signorelli, Luca, 402
Signoria, the, 11, 15, 24, 30, 88
Simonetta, Cecco, 119, 154
Six, the, 28
Sixteen, the, 24
Sixtus IV., election to Papacy, 106, 107; part in Pazzi Plot, 124, 144; interdict on Florence, 145; attitude towards Lorenzo, 114, 124, 144, 169; relations with the Florentines, 145, 180; relations with

France, 146, 167, 191; relations with Naples, 117; relations with the Swiss, 159, 169; relations with Venice, 106, 190; death, 194, 308
Soderini, Niccolò, 47, 48, 50, 63; Tommaso, 47, 48, 64, 70, 85, 110, 119, 155
Squarcialupi, 439–442
Strozzi, Alessandra, 49, 256; Filippo, 64, 172, 275, 438; Marietta, 293; Palla, 332
Stufa, Agnolo della, 61; Francesco, 175; Sigismondo, 132

T

Taxes, Decima Scalata, 260, 265; Dispiacente Sgravato, 260; income tax, 23, 257; poll tax, 260
Ten of War, 11, 26, 243, 245
Tolentino, Niccolò da, 128
Tornabuoni, Francesca, 405; Giovanni, 64; Lorenzo, 291; Lucrezia, 44, 351, 375, 409
Triple Alliance, 40–42, 106, 121, 222
Trivulzio, Gian Jacopo, 152, 162, 205, 207, 212, 229; Teodoro, 162
Turks, the, aggressions, 107, 167, 179; embassy to Florence, 192; support Osimo, 211, 212
Twelve, Committee of, 243

U

Uccello, Paolo, 392
Ugolini, Braccio, 190, 439
Urbino, Federigo, Count (afterwards Duke) of, 45, 66, 68, 72, 111, 151, 158, 162, 166, 187, 188
Uzzano, Niccolò da, 14, 15

V

Valla, 326
Valori, Bartolommeo, 94
Van Eyck, Jan, 403
Venice, relations with Florence, 57, 66, 106, 113, 117; relations with Milan, 37, 38, 55, 69, 117; relations with Naples, 107; relations with the Papacy, 53, 106, 107
Verrocchio, 392, 399, 400, 403–408
Vespucci, Guido, 94; Piero, 94, 136, 207, 221
Vinci, Leonardo da, 393, 400, 402, 407, 408
Visconti, House of, 3; Filippo Maria, 13, 37, 331; Gian Galeazzo, 12, 329; Valentina, 37
Vitelli, Niccolò, 116, 166, 187, 219
Volterra, 17, 109

W

Walther, 441

Z

Zuccalmaglio, Andrea, 189, 190

2113